THE

NUNNS Complaint

Againſt the

FRYARS.

BEING

The CHARGE given in to the COURT of *FRANCE*, by the *Nunns* of St. *Katherine* near *Provins*, againſt the Fathers *Cordeliers* their Confeſſours.

Several times Printed in *French*;

AND

Now Faithfully done into *Engliſh*.

LONDON,

Printed by *E. H.* for *Robert Pawlett*, at the *Bible* in *Chancery-Lane* near *Fleet-ſtreet*, 1676.

To the Truly Honourable

BELLALMO.

Moſt Dear, and Honoured Sir:

'TIs now long ſince, that I have deſir'd your Commands, when I was about leaving England. *I muſt confeſs, it was rather to teſtifie my eſteem of thoſe uncommon Qualifications in you, that have gained you the affections of the* beſt *men, and laid Charms of reſpect upon* all, *than to perſwade you, that I had any conſiderable ſervice in proſpect to gratifie you withal. But being loath to return without any ſignes of having ever been mindful of what I had made a profeſſion to you of, I ſought for ſome opportunity to continue you in the aſſurance I had given you of my* conſtant *diſpoſedneſs to do*

any thing that I thought might be agreeable to you; and which I look'd upon as an acknowledgment due from all honeſt men to Perſons ſo eminently virtuous. *And therefore after I had met with theſe* Religious Ladies, *and underſtood the nature of their grievances, and the uſe that might be made of their Information; I imagin'd that this might be no unacceptable Preſent to you, ſince I found that they were Strangers in* England, *and ſcarce ſuffer'd to look abroad in* France. *For I found them under as great reſtraint in the Shops of the* Stationers *of the* Sorbonne, *as ever they were in their Cloyſters, and no leave allow'd them to take the air, but with ſuch as would* pay well *for their company. They were indeed at firſt very publickly ſold; ſo that I have ſeen* three ſeveral Editions *of them, and have at preſent two of them in mine own hands. But after that the* Nunns *had gain'd their cauſe, and the* Cordeliers *were caſhier'd their houſe; to put a ſtop to all farther ſcandal amongſt the people, the* Copies, *that were printed, were order'd to be ſuppreſs'd and a watch ſet upon the Sellers. From this*

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ſevere confinement I did very much deſire to deliver them, and to bring them into a freer air, where their converſation would be acceptable, and courted. And I knew ſo well your kind receptions of all Strangers, of whom you might learn any thing, that I queſtion'd not but that theſe would find a welcome from you. I have reaſon to think, that you will find them very good company, and afford you variety of entertainment. It may be they will gratifie your curioſity by making you a ſpectator of ſuch lives, as are deſign'd to be withdrawn from the common view, and amongſt which poſſibly you will meet with ſuch new Scenes of Action, *as all your converſe never before repreſented to you. The* innocent Gallantry *of the* Nunns *and* Fryars *in ſome Pages may give you very agreeable divertiſement: And their exceſſes, and diſorders in others, if they raiſe* leſs grateful Paſſions *in you, yet will furniſh you with true, and certain accounts, how the Profeſſion of* Monkery *is reduced to practice. But whatever effect you find in your ſelf by it, I hope you will be confident, that my great deſigne in recommending this new Acquain-*

tance to you, was to aſſure you, that I am very zealouſly, without any fiction but what you approve of,

Moſt excellent *Bellalmo*,

Your moſt devoted humble
Servant,

LÆLIO.

THE

THE TRANSLATOR TO THE READER.

CErtainly never had Book more need of a *Preface* than this. For, to ſet no leſs than Eighteen angry Women in the Front of it, all full of *talk and ſtory*, muſt needs endanger the frighting away all Readers, that have any *reſpect* to their underſtanding. So that it looks like a malicious deſign againſt the *Stationer*, kindly to preſent him with a Copy, put him to the expence of the Preſs, but to lay ſuch a *ſpell* upon it, as no body ſhould dare to touch it. I thought it therefore neceſſary *fairly* to beſpeak the Cuſtomers, and to draw this *Curtain* before the firſt *terrible Scene*, till I had ſtroak'd the Readers into ſome tolerable *Gentleneſs*. It may be, when I have taken off the fear of this thing *with*

the rattle, the Birds will come in with more freedome. Know therefore, *Courteous Reader*, that the *Fair Strangers*, I here offer to you, are above the ordinary rate of the Sexe. By their way of life they are under very ſolemn Obligations to ſilence. They have vow'd to God, that they will never ſpeak any thing, but what is *Neceſſary*, or *Uſeful*. The things, that they come to acquaint you with, are things of importance, not all the *impertinencies* that were done, *when they were in France*. They will caution ſome againſt publike inconveniences, and *Alarm* others to look to their Families, and Relations. Indeed I know no ſort of men, whom they may not profitably inſtruct, nor any whom they ſhould offend, but ſuch as by the Lawes of the Land are not ſuppos'd to be amongſt us. The Aſſertors of the Priviledges of the *Gallican* Church, and the *Biſhops* there, have given them their applauſe already, and the *Seculars* never thought themſelves better juſtify'd againſt the *Regulars*. The *Hugonots* look'd on, and car'd

car'd not much what pleaſure others took in it, but were pretty ſure that it was one of the beſt arguments for their *Wives*, that they had ever met withal.

I could not but hope that they would be full as uſeful here, as they had been at home, and ſo reſolv'd they ſhould *travel* with me for the benefit of the Nation. But I muſt affirm, That if any party among us be more particularly oblig'd by it than others, it muſt be thoſe of the *Roman* Communion. All others can pretend to no greater advantage by it, but only that they have a confirmation of what they thought they were ſure of before, and had been long in the practice of: But theſe *Gentlemen* are taught new Truths about their neareſt Intereſts, the concerns of their Families, the Education of their *Daughters*, Their *Siſters*, Their *Coſins*, or their *Aunts*. For, if theſe Nunnes are to be believ'd, we may eaſily ſee, to what a kind of Education thoſe Young Ladies are committed, that are ordinarily ſent over from hence into the Convents of the *Poor Clare's* in

France

France, and *Flanders*. It may be, upon Examination they will be found to be far the greateſt number of thoſe, that go over into *Religious Houſes*. Over this *Order* it is, that theſe Cordeliers pretend a particular Juriſdiction by their * firſt Foundation, and which nothing but their ſcandalous behaviour has depriv'd them of, *not only* in this, *but* in ſeveral other Convents in *France*, as appears about the concluſion of this *Factum*. And had not the Affairs of the Kingdom favour'd the Intereſts of the *Epiſcoparian* party amongſt them more particularly in this preſent Age, Theſe Nunns might have groan'd much longer under their Tyranny, as well as have made ſo many fruitleſs attempts as they did, to ſhake it off for ſome conſiderable number of years before. We find that thoſe that are ſent to *Penſion* amongſt them are not exempt from the *common fate*, but are as liable to the purſuits of theſe *rude* and *unruly Friars* as the reſt. What, can we think, will become of thoſe Early Principles

* See Section 5, 6. &c.

ciples of *Virtue*, and *Innocency*, that the care of their Parents had planted in them, when they ſee ſuch different practices, as theſe, authoriz'd by the perſons, that are *not only* their Guides, and Inſtructors, but alſo more peculiarly devoted to God, and ſet apart from the World by ſolemn Vowes, and the Obſervance of rigorous and ſevere Impoſitions, for an inſtance, and tryal of what the Principles of a Religion could do? But *more eſpecially* when they ſee all this ſo cuſtomary a faſhion amongſt them, as to get the Authority of their *Batchelors*, *Doctors*, *Superiours*, and *Provincials*, and all the men of *greateſt note* amongſt them. What other effect can it naturally produce in the beſt diſpos'd amongſt them, than what we ſee ordinarily done in the World, that is an imitation of thoſe actions which they ſee conſtantly practis'd by the moſt *Regular*, and beſt reputed? Surely it muſt make them look upon an innocent and ſober life as a meer notional thing, and not to be found in nature, when they find ſo general a corruption

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of Manners (as theſe Nunnes have atteſted) amongſt thoſe, who are bound up by all the ſolemn Obligations imaginable, and ſequeſtred thereby from all the impediments of *common life*, to attend to nothing but *Divine Inſpirations*, and *extraordinary Sanctity*. In all theſe reflections they will be ſtill much more confirm'd, when they come to hear them juſtifie themſelves in their practices by falſe Principles of *New Morality*; when they hear them nicely ſtate, how much may lawfully be permitted to their *new relation* (their *Bon Amy*;) how much muſt be allow'd to their preſent ſtate, and Natural Inclinations; when they are informed by them, what are the only neceſſary requiſites to qualifie them for a *plenary Abſolution*; and how eaſie compenſations for their paſt Offences will bribe the Divine Goodneſs to a *reconcilement*, and purchaſe them an *Intimacy*, and *Friendſhip* with God: In ſumme, when they are acquainted, what bleſſed Priviledges their Church is endow'd withall, that by the vertue of its Indulgences

gences upon the performance of ſome ſmall bodily motions can confer an *Imputative Saintſhip* that ſhall equalize a *true one.* If then they take a full proſpect of all theſe Conſiderations together, and find *licentiouſneſs allow'd by Principles*, and made a *Caſe of Conſcience*; Or, If *more Exorbitant*, *clear'd* off by *Abſolutions* without the trouble of *Reformation*; Or, if yet attended with *anxiety*, and *uneaſineſs*, turn'd into a *Traffick* with the Divine Juſtice by *Commutations of Penances*, which alſo may be *Exchang'd* yet farther for greater Eaſe; what can we expect, but that they ſhould make themſelves *Votaries* to ſo agreeable a ſtate of life, aſſoon as might be, and abhor the regularity of *true*, and *ſincere* Virtue, all the precepts of which they muſt needs now look upon as *Phantaſtick Rules* for *Impracticable* things, and fitted only for *Naked Ghoſts*, and *another* World? Locks, and Barrs, and Iron Grates may raiſe *fine ſolemn Imaginations* in a ſtranger, but they will prove very weak Securities for their very *natural Honeſty*, when there are *Keyes*,

or

or a free acceſs for the *Cordelier* Confeſſour.

By this time, I ſuppoſe, the Reader will *fairly* conclude by my zeal, That the *Timaretta whom I ador'd* was put to School to a Convent, and that there I was baſely *chous'd* of her by a *Fryar*. I wholly diſcharge the *Fathers* of any ſuch imputation, yet as I would be loath to truſt them, ſo in *Charity* I bid my Neighbours look to themſelves. I forewarn them of ſending their *Women* to *Conventicles* beyond Sea, when we ſee ſuch ill effects of it at home. And as I ſhall be glad to have oblig'd thoſe that take it for a courteſie, ſo my revenge upon thoſe, that will not take my counſel, ſhall be to commend thoſe that do.

But my Countrymen of the *Reformation*, I hope, will make better uſe of this *advantage*: They will now reflect with more pleaſure upon the Prudence of their Anceſtours, whom now *we may ſuppoſe* to have very warily examin'd the behaviour of the *Monaſticks*: *'Tis very likely*, that they ſaw, that the Religious did

did not alwayes ſpend their time in *Devotion*, or *Study*, or *Acts of Charity*, or *Bodily labour*, or *Innocent Divertiſement*: *It may be*, it was not ſo much *One Anne Bolen*, as thouſands of *Melita's*, and ten thouſands of *Thyrſis's*, that caus'd the ruine of the famouſeſt Structures in the Land: *And it's probable*, that the ſcandalous diſorders of ſuch an Order of men, as theſe, who had all the advantages that men could have, to obſerve their *Vowes* of *Cælibacy*, might make our Sober Governours conclude, That thoſe *Arbitrary* and *unalterable Reſolutions* were neceſſary cauſes of very *dangerous* Conſequences. We ſee in the preſent caſe, that here there has been a *General corruption* of a whole *Order* of Regulars, of their *very Superiours*, and *Provincials*, and this for *very conſiderable numbers of years together*; And yet this *Order* is eſteemed one of the ſevereſt, and ſtricteſt of all the *Regulars*. Their Founder, St. *Francis*, was the moſt extravagant of any, (both in his own practice, and in the *Rule* he left his Diſciples) for the rigidneſs of his Injunctions.

ctions. He obliges them to *Beggery*, to ſuch *Self-denyal*, and *Mortification*, and *Diſcipline*, as one would imagine ſhould make them inſenſible of any kind of worldly pleaſure. And all this they have ſolemnly ſworn to obſerve, and in order to it have withdrawn themſelves from the noiſe, and buſineſs of the World, and to confirm themſelves in their firſt reſolutions, have *deliberately* ty'd themſelves before God never to alter their preſent ſtate. The *Church*, and *State*, where they live, oblige them under penalties of the higheſt nature to keep cloſe to the obſervance of what they had vow'd, and *publick Infamy* alwayes attended the violation of it: Yet all theſe ill conſequences are not able to ſecure them; But, as if there were ſome *Magick* in nature that was too irreſiſtible for all theſe proviſions and precautions, we ſee them *deliver'd up* to the uncontrollable power of their natural Inclinations. And *indeed*, when we conſider not the frame of our Natures, *nor* the dependencies of our beings upon the varieties of Objects, that

that act upon us, but will, contrary to the Laws of our Creation, pretend *in a very wrong notion* to take the Kingdom of Heaven by violence, and forc'd Methods, and bind our ſelves unalterably to ſuch Laws in the doing of it, as ſhall contradict thoſe inclinations, that God ha's planted in us, and (it may be) given that power, and force to in ſome, that they ſhall not be countermanded, but by the ordinary Proviſion, that he ha's made for them; it is no wonder, that we find our ſelves *raſhly fooliſh* in endeavouring to be *wiſer*, than he that made us, and inſtead of being *extravagantly Divine*, prove at laſt to be *ridiculouſly brutiſh*. But on the other ſide were the Deſigne of theſe Religious retirements from the world ſo manag'd, as that they ſhould be *frec* and *voluntary*, both for the beginning, and continuing of them, and made ſerviceable to the Publick, *either* as convenient Seminaries of ſuch as ſhould be any ways influential abroad, *or* as Receptacles for ſuch, whoſe former

Merits ſhould claim their Alimony, and Writ of eaſe from the places, which they had oblig'd, they would be *ſo far* from being diſlik'd, that they ſeem to be *by all means* encourag'd, and promoted:

Before I diſmiſs this whole Cauſe, I think it not unſeaſonable to invite the *Intelligent Reader* to take a ſmall view of the preſent State of the *Roman Church*. We know, *that* the Regulars are the Janizaries of the Court of *Rome*; *That* they have their exemptions from the Juriſdiction of the Clergy of thoſe particular Kingdoms, where they are, and ſo have no dependance upon their Natural *Prince*, or *Biſhop*. And yet to the care of ſome of theſe are almoſt all the youth of *Europe* committed. It was the complaint of the Univerſity of *Paris* in 1643, *That* the *Jeſuits* had ruin'd all the Univerſities in *France*, by draining all the youth into their Schools, ſo that the two Colledges in *Paris*, had more than all the Colledges beſides: And that almoſt

almoſt all the other Univerſities had *ſcarce* Auditors for their Profeſſors. *'Tis well known* at preſent, that the Colledges of the Jeſuits are almoſt as many as the Grammar-Schools, in *France*. Their teaching *gratis* being a great invitation to a People that ha's ſo many publick Impoſitions upon them, and ſo little Mony. *'Tis as well known*, that the firſt Leſſon which they endeavour to inſinuate into their Diſciples is, to be firm and conſtant in the *Maximes* that they inſtil into them; which indeed we find is a natural effect of that Relation betwixt a Tutor and his Scholar, when there are not mighty precautions us'd to prevent it. But if we be at all acquainted with the Affairs of thoſe men, *'tis ſtill much better known*, what are thoſe Principles, that *not only* particular men, *but* ſuch as have the Subſcriptions of the Deputies of the whole Order, have publickly own'd in Print about *Moral Theology*, and the Government and Conduct of our Lives. The *Provincial Letters* have

ſufficiently ſhewn by an infinite number of Quotations out of their *Principal* and *Leading men*, all Licens'd by the Authority of their Order, what deductions they have made from that Principle of *Directing the Intention*, ſo as to indulge all manner of Immorality; killing men for a box on the ear, though they would run away from them; Theft, Uncleanneſs, Lying in the groſs ſenſe, Killing of Judges, and Witneſſes, bare-fac'd Simony, Covetouſneſs, ſo as to wiſh the death of the Perſons that ſtand in their way, aſſiſting of Superiors in things known to be directly vicious, palpable Cheating, and all this with this only Proviſo, that they be all the while ſo *well-meaning men*, that they look only at the Good, that may ariſe from the thing, to their advantage, not the hurt and damage that will follow upon it to their Neighbours, though the latter may far exceed the former.

The Collections of theſe *Maximes* have been done by many out of their Wri-

Writings ; ſome very pernitious ones, by the faithful *Grotius*, in his Book *de Jure Belli, & Pacis.* But to remove all *ſubterfuges*, and ſcruples from thoſe who have not leiſure to examine theſe Caſuiſts, the Learned Author of thoſe Letters, one of their own Church, ha's perform'd it, the weakneſs of their Anſwers to him eſtabliſhed it, and given Authority to what he has affirmed.

Excepting therefore that ſmall Party of *Seculars*, that never had their Education under theſe men, and thoſe few, that became Converts afterwards from the Principles that they had once ſucked in (*no very ordinary thing*) ſhall we not conclude, that the remaining body of the Church is in a very deplorable condition, and it may be, *ſo univerſally*, that it may almoſt endanger the *viſibility* of the other *little remnant?*

Next to the *Jeſuits*, in power, and intereſt our *Franciſcans* are eſteem'd the moſt prevailing Party ; and as the *Jeſuits* have got the *vogue* for the *only Ma-*

ſters of Learning, ſo theſe come in for their claim of the *greateſt Exemplarineſs* of life. For there being two neceſſary requiſites for all practical Sciences, that is, *Rules*, and *Inſtances of the practice of thoſe Rules for particular circumſtances*: It was thought fit by the then Governing-party of that Church, to ſet up a certain Order of men, retired from the common converſe of the reſt, who ſhould be as ſo many *convincing Experiments* to demonſtrate the power, and efficacy of the Rules of their Religion; and theſe were always thought to be more neceſſary for their publick influence upon the lives of the people, as the power of *Example* exceeds that of *Precept*, or as a *true fire* does that of a Picture. Of this kind are our *Franciſcans*, and of all other Orders, by the ſeverity of their Inſtitution *moſt likely* to anſwer their Churches intention, both for the evidencing the Principles of it by their practice, and for perſwading imitation by their Examples. See then the utmoſt of what ſuch a

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Religion can do, and what *Fruits* are to be expected amongst such, as imitate them. If *Jesuits* have given dangerous Precepts, certainly the *Fryars* had given a greater strength to them by their lives, and practices. So that they must still have that præeminence, so often boasted of, of being at wonderful *Unity* with one another, of having a perfect conformimity betwixt their *Rules*, and *Examples*, and (considering the indefatigableness of both for promoting the common Interest) of spreading their *Doctrine*, and Party almost *Universally*. This seems to be the present repræsentation of the state of that Church, and alarms all *Christian Princes*, since Christianity is almost lost in Christendom, to recover this Holy Land out of the hands of this Usurping *Leviathan*, and to settle *new* Teachers of *Old Morality*, and let punishment distinguish betwixt the ordinary sober practice of Virtue, and *Pharisaical Impurity*, or *Holy Cheats*. There cannot be a more glorious Design, than

to take care againſt the debauching of *natural Principles* by a falſe *Religion*, and of advancing their Power by the happy aſſiſtances of a true one: Nor a greater ſecurity of the Civil Government, than by excluding all other *Independent Authorities* from the over-ruling of natural Conſcience, the *Spring* of all humane Actions, that tend to the Publick good, aud the preſervation of Commonwealths. The *diſtinct* Juriſdictions may otherwiſe claſh with one another, in which conteſt we may well think, that the *Conductors of the Conſcience* will have the ſuperiority. The experience of this has been fatal to the Perſons of *Princes*, and does always make them obnoxious to bold *Aſſaſſinates* in their greateſt ſecurity. If there happen any Diſputes about Civil Rights in the Bowels of a State, the way ordinarily taken to determine them is by open and generous Methods; but if once *Bulls* of Excommunication are paſs'd, or it be generally ſuppos'd, that the *Prince* is an ill friend

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to ſome *Uſurpations*, or ill conduct of the *Church*, he is no longer ſecure in his *Privy Chamber*, nor in the midſt of a well-arm'd Guard of *Suiſz*. The *Deſperate Religioniſt* is ambitious to oblige God, and his Church by murdering his *Prince*, and loſing his own life in the moſt exquiſite tortures. In one *Age* have we had no leſs than two Inſtances of this nature from *France*, and a third attempt without effect. Is not this a ſufficient forfeit of *their Liberty*, and *toleration*, that maintain this Opinion, and have often evidenc'd it by their practice for more than 800 years, not only to the prejudice of the *Princes* perſon, but frequently alſo to the diſſolution of his Government? I leave the inſtancing in known Stories to thoſe that have made it their particular deſign.

It is, I confeſs, no very eaſie thing to remove an *eſtabliſhed* Power, that has a general Intereſt to ſecond it, and *Henry the Fourth* (who foreſaw the danger, which at laſt had its effect upon him) when

when often ſollicited to baniſh the *Jeſuits*, who were ſomething inſolent upon their Reſtauration, was afraid, that they would *ſend him out of the world* before he could *ſend them out of France*: And therefore ſure theſe ſhould applaud, and reliſh their preſent condition, that are far from fearing the power of ſuch men, as they would harldly be able to get rid of, and encourage all endeavours that are us'd to prevent the increaſe of them.

Notwithſtanding all this Tragical, and true repræſentation, that I have drawn of the *preſent Face* of things, I cannot but take notice of a *particular Myſtery of Providence*, that ha's layd ſuch ſtrong and ſenſible obligations (in the frame of our mind, and the ſtate of things without us) to a right, and due behaviour of our ſelves, and doe's moreover ſo ſecond them with peculiar influences of his good Spirit, that we often ſee good men ſecur'd from moſt of the ill effects of pernicious Principles,

and

and that they contradict their *Belief* by their *Actions*. This ha's made me have a *reſpect* for *many* of that Party of men, (whom I have here been ſo free withal), ſuch namely, as have given all outward proofs of Innocencie, Juſtice, and (which is ſtrongeſt) of *Univerſal Benignity, and Charity*. And the like Obſervations, I have very much pleas'd my ſelf in, when in all the converſe that I have had with the ſeveral varieties, and Sects of *Religion*, I could not but perceive, that in all kinds, and ſorts of them, there were ſome very *ſignal inſtances* of *Good*, and *Virtuous* Tempers. But then the Deſigne of *Religion*, and *Rules* of Practice being to lay firmer, and cloſer Engagements to *Reformation* of Life, and Manners, than the ordinary helps of our natural diſpoſitions, it follows, that whatſoever *Religion* contradicts this, puts men into greater danger, than if they were without it. And conſequently, that many of thoſe who in other circumſtances would obey the motions of

their

their good Inclinations, when back'd, and encourag'd by the *Learned*, and the *Grave* of that Religion will make no ſcruple of taking the *Determinations of the Church* for Guides, and Conductors to a more eaſie, and pleaſant, though a very miſchievous way.

After all this long and tedious Diſcourſe, the main of which is grounded upon the truth of the things that are alledg'd in the *Factum*, It may be ſcrupl'd by ſome, whether it were not either a contrivance of the *Archbiſhop of Sens*, or an *exceſs of paſſion* in the Nunns, that tranſported them beyond the bounds of *truth, and honeſty* to depoſe ſuch things of the *Fryars*, as never were done. To both which I ſhall return, *That* after that the compoſure of the *Factum* had been charg'd upon the *Archbiſhop*, the Nunns call'd the *Notaries* of the next Town over to them, and there made a Proteſtation to them, which (as all publick Acts uſually are) was regiſtred by them; in which they vouch that Writing

ting to be their own: and add beſides, that they have ſtill far more horrible things to depoſe againſt them, if they ſtill perſiſted to moleſt them: *That* the *Nunns* did all this deliberately, for a great continuance of time together: *That* they were the *Graveſt*, and moſt *Antient* amongſt them: *That* there were no leſs than eighteen of them: *That* by their Quality, the Teſtimony of one of them is eſteem'd of æqual validity, with that of many others put together, ſince, when there is no evidence to the contrary, their integrity is ſuppos'd to be more ſtrictly preſerv'd, and ſecur'd by the *ſolemn Conſecration* of themſelves to God's Service: *That* they expos'd their own Reputation to the cenſure of the World by thus doing, and *were ſenſible* of it before they did it: *That* they themſelves were *Actors*, and *Parties* in moſt of the things, that are depoſed; and is not all this ſufficient to qualifie them for *Witneſſes*, and make it clear, that they did both *know* the matters, which they

they teſtifi'd; and did *faithfully deliver* the matters which they knew? What Judge can deſire more ſufficiencie in a Witneſs, than *Knowledge* and *Integrity*? But yet to this I add, *That* the *Fact* was ſo notorious, that the *Court of France* thought fit, notwithſtanding the great Scandal that muſt needs ariſe upon it in thoſe *Catholick Countries*, to diſcharge the *Cordeliers* of their Office, to deprive them of a Juriſdiction, that they had enjoy'd for *many hundreds of years*. *That* this could not be prevented by all the Intereſt that thoſe Fryars could make, although 'tis well known that they are the moſt numerous of all the Orders of the *Regulars*, and the *moſt powerful* (except that of the *Jeſuits*) and notwithſtanding that they had made uſe of all their *Arts of Addreſs*, and *all kind of Sollicitations* both in the *Courts of Rome, and France* to prevent the Execution of the Sentence againſt them.

For

For the care taken in the *Tranſlation*, I have only this to ſay, That I make no Queſtion, but that upon the comparing of the Copies, it will appear, that I have very *induſtriouſly* avoided all *manner of liberty*, that might any ways endanger the true meaning of the Teſtimonies, and have purpoſely omitted all the Ornaments, that would, it may be, be requiſite for the recommending any other Writing to the Reader. For I imagin'd, that where *Religious Perſons* are brought in to accuſe one another, all care ought to be taken that their words be *faithfully* related; and if made to put on a *foreign Dreſs*, that it do not diſguiſe the natusal Meen, and Air of the Parties; *That* the Tranſlation be as little different, as may be, from the Words, and Connexion, that were made uſe of in the *Original* Narration. So that I believe, it will be found, that I have here follow'd the Style of a *Court of Juſtice*, rather than that of the Modiſh part

part of the *Town*, or the *Theatre*. For the whole Deſign of it being a *matter of Fact*, I thought a *Verbal* Tranſlation would the beſt ſuit it, leſt the altering of the Words ſhould cauſe a miſrepreſentation of the true Sence.

A

CHAPTER-ACT

OF THE

RELIGIOUS SISTERS

OF THE

Royal Monaſtery of Saint *Catharine*, near *Provins*, to own their *Factum* againſt the *Cordeliers*, and all the Matters of Fact contained in the ſame.

THIS *day* Monday *the fourth day of the month of* April, *one thouſand ſix hundred and ſixty ſeven, about three of the clock in the afternoon, We*

Notaries, Hereditary Note-keepers, and Regiſters to the King, underſigned, at the requeſt of the Siſters Margaret Le Cocq de Chauvigny, Magdelaine Pilon, Suſan Gaultier, De Flovigny, Gedouin, Darzillers, Paris, De Beaufort, Du Pas, Bourdault, De la Salle, Rohault l' Ainee, Rohault la Jeune, Veſſiere, Bourgouin, Guignet, Des Plaſſes, *and* D' Aguerre; *All of them* Nuns *profeſſed in the* Royal Monaſtery of the Mount Saint Catharine *near* Provins, *are come over to the ſaid Monaſtery, where being, the ſaid* Religious Siſters *being aſſembled according to the uſual manner, they made a Declaration to us, Tha having underſtood that the* Fathers

Fathers Cordeliers, *notwithſtanding, and to the prejudice of the Procuration, that they gave of it, intended and endeavoured to make the* Factum, *that they had compoſed for the defence of their Cauſe againſt the ſaid* Fathers Cordeliers, *be reputed to be,* A. piece without any conſent to it on their part, *and of which my Lord Archbiſhop of* Sens *was the Authour; That ſo, after their having been the cauſes of an infinite number of diſorders in their Monaſtery, aſwell in their Spiritual as their Temporal concerns, they might by this means ſtill fruſtrate the deſign that the* Religious Siſters *had to publiſh the particular accounts of them, (though*

with a great deal of regret, and confuſion of Spirit;) ſince that they have learnt at laſt by God's mercy to prefer the Salvation of their Souls before all Temporal and Worldly conſiderations: They do now acknowledg and declare, *That they made the ſaid* Factum, *that they gave the Copies and Originals of it, and that they are ready reſpectively, and every one in particular for her own part, to maintain the ſaid* Factum *in all the things that it contains, and moreover to add to them* Things much more horrible, *which alſo have been already declared by them, and are in the hands of the ſaid Lord Archbiſhop of* Sens, *if what is contain'd in the ſaid* Factum

ctum *be not thought ſufficient.*

Moreover, *They have told us, and declared to us, That the* Widow Du Gaſt *could not truly ſay, that the ſaid Lord Archbiſhop of* Sens *did compoſe the ſaid* Factum, *that he gave her the Papers, and Manuſcripts of it, and took the Sheets back again: but only, that the perſon who was intruſted to carry it to be printed, did, it may be, make uſe of the name of the ſaid Lord Archbiſhop to ſecure himſelf, and to avoid the having it ſeized upon by the* Fathers Cordeliers, *in caſe it had been printed in the* Nuns *name. As in effect, notwithſtanding all kind of precaution they could uſe to prevent it, they have been acquainted, that*

the ſaid Fathers Cordeliers *did ſeize upon ſome of the Sheets of it, which they would have put into the hands of Monſieur the Lieutenant Criminal of* Paris, *to hinder all their deſigns and intentions.*

Of the which preſent Declaration thus made by the abovenamed Religious Siſters *after they had been heard ſeparately, being aſſembled together, as is aforeſaid, thoſe* Religious Siſters *did demand an Act of us: And to them this preſent one is given, and granted to ſerve for what it is proper.*

This was done, paſſed, and diſpatch'd in the ſaid Monaſtery: And all the ſaid Religious Siſters *before*

before-named, *and appearing in their own persons have signed* upon the Copy of these presents, *together with us Notaries signed underneath, it remaining in the possession of* Bruyant. *Signed*, Bruyant, *and* De Huchy. *Each of them a Paraphe.*

Compared with the Original by the Kings Counsellor, Secretary of the House of the Crown of *France*, and of the Finances.

A
FACTUM,
OR,
DECLARATION in COURT;
FOR

The *Religious Siſters* of Saint *Catharine*, near *Provins*, againſt the *Fathers Cordeliers*.

IT is with a great deal of regret that the *Religious Siſters* of Saint *Catharine*, near *Provins*, ſee themſelves forc'd to give an account to the Publick of the Suits which they make at Court againſt the *Fathers Cordeliers*. But the injuſtice, with which it has pleas'd thoſe *Fathers* to traduce their beſt intentions, and to make the unanimous conſent of the *greateſt* and *ſoundeſt* part of their Community paſs for a Faction, and a *Caball*

ball only of ſome private perſons, will not allow them to hold their peace; and they might well fear, if they diſſembled their ſenſe of this injury, that they might ſeem to *authorize* all their other diſorders. It is nothing then but the bare neceſſity of *defending* and *juſtifying* themſelves, which moves them to ſpeak. And whatſoever miſchiefs theſe *Fathers* may have done in their Houſe, whatſoever ſcandals they may have occaſion'd; yet nothing does more nearly affect them, than the force which they now conſtrain them to put upon themſelves to publiſh ſuch things, as they could have wiſh'd for the intereſt of *God* and his *Church*, for the honour of that whole *Order*, aſwell as upon the account of their own *reputation*, to have buried in an eternal ſilence.

SECTION

SECTION I.

What gave occaſion to the Suits, which the Nuns *of Saint* Catharine *make at Court againſt the* F. Cordeliers.

THe Monaſtery of the *Nuns* of Saint *Clare* near *Provins*, was founded in the year 1237. by *Theobald* the Fourth, King of *Navarre*, and Earl of *Brie* and *Champaigne*. The Traditions of this Monaſtery ſay, that this Prince caus'd it to be built in honour of Saint *Catharine* upon occaſion of a viſion, which he had in his Caſtle of *Provins*, from whence he had for ſeveral nights together ſeen upon the Hill, where the Monaſtery now ſtands, a bright ſhining light, in the middle of which he diſcovered a Lady of extraordinary beauty, who with the point of a Sword mark'd out the compaſs of this Houſe. This Prince, who had a great devotion for Saint *Catharine*,

Catharine, was perſwaded that it was ſhe, that thus deſign'd out the place, where God would be ſerv'd under her good guidance. He reſolv'd therefore to build a *Nunnery* there, to endow it, and to ſettle thoſe *Nuns* there, whom Saint *Clare*, who was then living, had ſent him from *Aſſize*, from whence the fame of her great Sanctity had diffus'd it ſelf all over the World. Theſe *holy Maids* liv'd in his Caſtle of *Provins* the ſpace of four years, at the end of which the Houſe being compleatly finiſh'd, they at laſt took poſſeſſion of it.

Theobald the Fifth, who ſucceeded him, had not leſs affection for this Monaſtery than his Father, who had left his heart there for a pledge of his love. He gave theſe *Nuns* great endowments, granted them great priviledges, and at the ſollicitation of *Iſabella* the daughter of Saint *Lewis*, whom he had married, he procured of Pope *Urban* the Fourth a permiſ-

ſion

ſion for them to take the *Rule*, which at the deſire of Saint *Lewis* he had made for the *Nuns* of *Long-Champ*, who had been founded by this *holy King* twenty two years after the Monaſtery of Saint *Catharine*. *Theobald* the Fifth dying as he return'd from the voyage, that he had undertaken with Saint *Lewis* his Father-in-Law beyond Sea, would be buried in this Monaſtery: The Princeſs *Iſabella* his wife, who died the ſame year, choſe likewiſe this place for her interment; and accordingly their aſhes lie here to this day.

This is all that is known of the Hiſtory of this Monaſtery. The ſeveral Fires that have happened, and the care that the *Cordeliers* have taken to make away all the Titles and Writings, hinder us from being able to give any further light into it. There is nothing but a Bull of *Alexander* the Fourth, which eſcaped them, which ſhall hereafter in its place be mentioned, and

and a permiſſion from the *Archbiſhop* of *Sens* to beg in the *Dioceſs* for the rebuilding of the Church of Saint *Catharine*, which had been burnt down by the *Engliſh*; ſo that one cannot preciſely determine the time, when theſe *Cordeliers* firſt intruded themſelves into this Monaſtery. All that is known for certain, is, that about an hundred years ſince, this Houſe having been again conſumed by Fire, was a while after rebuilt by the care of the Lady *Margaret de Billy*, of the Illuſtrious Houſe of *Prunay*, then *Abbeſs* of it, who retired in the mean while into the Caſtle of *Provins*, as her Predeceſſors had done upon the like occaſions.

Five or ſix and twenty years after *Madam d' Oſonville* being choſen *Abbeſs*, and finding the Houſe in horrible irregularities, occaſion'd by the conduct of the *Cordeliers*, who had made themſelves Maſters of it, ſet her ſelf about applying ſome remedies againſt

gainſt it. She got a *Nun* of *Amiens*, where the *Rule* was obſerv'd, to come over to her for this purpoſe, to teach it her *Nuns*, to give them the example of it, and to be aſſiſtant to her to deny thoſe *Fathers* entrance into the Houſe. God preſerv'd her forty years in this Charge in ſpite of all the attempts, and perſecutions of thoſe *Fryers*, during all which time they fruſtrated all her good deſigns, and all the regulations which ſhe had made for ſettling the Diſcipline according to the advice of many *learned Divines*; ſo that as the greateſt number of the *Nuns* were habituated to theſe infamous communications, ſhe could never draw them out of it, notwithſtanding all the precautions ſhe could make uſe of: and the diſorder did ſtill much more encreaſe after her death, which happen'd in 1636, which was the time, when the *Cordeliers* bethought themſelves of making the *Nuns* accept of the *Triennial*, that the *Abbeſſes* might be

be in greater dependance upon them, that they themſelves might be abſolute Maſters of the Elections, and that they might with the more eaſe and ſucceſs oppoſe the good deſigns of thoſe that ſhould be elected.

They exerciſed their Tyranny in this Houſe till the year 1648, when many of the *Nuns* abhorring their extravagancies did make ſuit in *Parliament* to be diſcharged of their conduct. But *Father le Fort*, who was then appointed Commiſſary, and who rul'd all in this Monaſtery, imagin'd, that now was the moſt favourable opportunity offer'd him to advance himſelf higher in the eſteem of thoſe of his own *Order*, and to make himſelf ſtill more abſolute in this Houſe. He thereupon gives ſuch advice to each of the Parties, as was moſt proper to foment the Diviſion; and in the *Chapters*, which he called no leſs than three times a day, he loaded them with ſuch horrid and injurious language upon their

their intending to withdraw themſelves from under their direction, calling them *People of Sack-cloath and Cord, Souls of Brimſtone and Salt-peter*; That thoſe *Maids* being terrifi'd with it, ſeeing that unleſs they were aſſiſted in it, they could not yet ſhake off this ſo intolerable a Yoke, were contented to let them make ſome new regulations, and to let the late *Monſieur Coqueret* be named by the *Parliament* to draw them up for them: and thus they continued under the ſame Government, but yet hoping withal that the *Regulations* that were made for them, would give ſome remedy at leaſt to the evils that they laboured under. But theſe *Regulations* were never put in practice, nor ſo much as communicated to the *Nuns*, the *Cordeliers* being always reſolved to retain to themſelves the ſame power, and the ſame facility, to commit the ſame diſorders.

At laſt in the year 1663, The *Nuns*

seeing that the *Abbess*, who had then finished her Triennial, and who had never been advanced to that charge but by the *factious arts* of the *Cordeliers*, would, if she were longer continu'd, wholly consume both Temporall and Spiritual incomes of the Monastery to satisfie the greedines of these *Fathers*, were resolved to make choice of another. The *Cordeliers* were well aware of this design, and omitted nothing to continue this *Nun* in her Government. They made use of all ordinary *artifices* in order to it. The *Provincial* took those for *Associates*, *Scrutatour*, and *Secretary*, whom he knew to have most power over the inclinations of the *Nuns*. They had private conferences with them, some of which were continued till two a-clock in the morning: They used the assistance of Kindred, and Friends abroad, who openly made parties for her. They spared not for either promises, or threats. Some of

of the *Nuns* a great while before had by the Phyſitians order deſired leave to go out to take the *waters*. They were now offered to have it upon condition that they would give her their vote: They had refuſed it them for two years before, foreſeeing what uſe they might make of it at the time of the *Election*. They gave them and many others *Notes to ſigne*, that were wrot by a *Cordelier* to aſſure themſelves of their votes, and of their faithfulneſs to what they had promiſed: They took away the office of Scribe from her, *to whom it did belong* according to the order of the Houſe. And in fine, after all theſe precautions proceeding to an *Election*, after that the *ſcruting* had been renewed *no leſs than nine times*, without being able to overcome the reſolution which the *beſt-inclined amongſt them* had taken, never to conſent to the *Election* of a perſon who was ſo *directly contrary* to the good of their Houſe; They adviſed her to

give her vote *for her self*, and the *Provincial* also gave her his, a *practice never before heard of amongst them:* so that of *thirty three votes* counting that of *her own*, and another of the *Provincial's*, who had no manner of right to give any, she had in all but seventeen. Although this *Election* was against all forme, yet they were forced to suffer it: but not without this provision, that the *Treasurers* should be joyned with the *Abbess* in the management of the *Temporal* revenue, and should signe the *Acquittances*: which nevertheless *was never put in execution*, no more than all those other things, which the *Society* has demanded from time to time for the settling of good Order, and which these *Fathers* to draw them to consent to their desires promised them, but did afterwards *make sport at it*, when they had obtained their ends so that all things have ever since continued in greater confusion, and disorder.

But at last God being weary of the insolence

inſolence, with which theſe *Religious* abuſed the eaſie natures of theſe poor *Maids*, did ſo provide, that a perſon *unknown to them*, who was deeply affected for the loſs of ſo many Souls conſecrated to God, preſented a *Remonſtrance to the late Queen Mother*, wherein was declared in ſhort to her *Majeſty* a part of the exceſſes, which the *Cordeliers* committed in their Houſe, and the neceſſity there was of removing thoſe *Directors* from the *Nuns*. That *Princeſs* was concerned at thoſe diſorders; ſhe teſtified her indignation againſt the *Authors* of them, and got a letter of the *Kings Privy Seal*, to command the *Provincial* to ſet things in right order again.

In this *Remonſtrance* there was mention made of two *Nuns*, to whom the *Cordeliers* had given leave to go out of the Houſe: My Lord *Archbiſhop of Sens* upon the ſcandalous reports that were ſpred abroad concerning them, had adviſed the *Provincial* to make

them come home again: That *Father* therefore commanded them to return to the Monaſtery: They obeyed him. And he himſelf went over thither a little while after to puniſh them for the pretended ſcandal they had given. And to do it after a more exemplary manner, this ſevere Judge, and *ſage Reformer*, as thoſe *Nuns* themſelves report it, ſet himſelf to *careſs* them for three days together, to entertain them with a thouſand *expreſſions of fondneſs*, & an infinite company of idle *profeſſions of love*, and to turn all that had been ſaid of them abroad into *raillery*. After all which the *Secretary* made them *ſigne* a paper, which upon the *faith of the Provinciall* they were made to believe, was a declaration of their Innocence, as indeed they had all reaſon to believe; ſince that one of them maintains, *That in an entertaine, which he had with her for a good part of the night, and in which he had made her a thouſand fooliſh careſſes, ſo as ſe-*

veral

veral times to deſire to kiſſe her, That he had then declared to her, that he was not at all perſwaded, that either ſhe or her Companion had deſerved any puniſhment, but that what he did in it was only to take off all blame from their Order out of the Queen Mother's apprehenſion: Adding, *That he would not have her trouble her ſelf for what he ſhould do the next morning, which he had not ſo much as acquainted his ſecretary withall;* And, *that the excommunication, which he muſt of neceſſity pronounce againſt her, ſhould be but a formal ſhew, a counterfeit anger, and a piece of Mummery.* But the next morning having entred the Houſe, and called theſe two *Nuns* to a *Chapter*, to make them confeſs that they had *put off their Habit*, and conſequently had incurr'd the penalty of *Excommunication*, for which he would have them deſire *Abſolution* in full *Chapter*, that *Nun* to whom the *Provincial* had made ſo many profeſſions of Friendſhip, and who made account, that ſhe had ſigned

him a *certificate* to the contrary, was ſo touched with this kind of procedure that ſhe withdrew from them inſtead of coming on forwards. The *Provincial* thereupon commanded his *Secretary to goe and ſeize her, and to bring her upon his back:* Thoſe were his very words.

The *Secretary* preſſed her with a great deal of earneſtneſs to doe what was deſired of her; and to make her more *tractable*, and to free her apprehenſion of the fear ſhe might have of ſome ill uſage, he had the impudence to *embrace her, and to kiſs her by force in the preſence of all the Nuns*, and ſaid to her aloud, *My Heart, My Dear, My Friend, be our deliverer with the Queen Mother, thou wilt oblige us more than I am able to expreſs.* But ſeeing that all this could not incline her, he *fell down on his knees* before her, and proteſted to her, that as *the Provincial had promiſed her all that they did was but a piece of Mummery, and that they would*

would null the ſentence immediately after it was pronounced.

All theſe extravagant ſubmiſſions not being able to overcome the reſolution of this *Nun*, the *Provincial* gave ſentence againſt her and her Companion, by which he deprived them of *Active* and *Paſſive* vote, of the offices of the *Religion*, of the freedom of *Converſing at the grate*, and this for as long a time as he and his ſucceſſours ſhould think fit, and told her particularly that had ſhown ſo much ſtiffeneſs, that he *Excommunicated* them: And in effect, the *Cordelier Confeſſor* of the Houſe would not ſince that time admit them to the *Sacraments*.

Theſe *Nuns* ſeeing themſelves condemned to ſuch rigorous ſeverities *without* other form of proceſs, *without* bringing in either charge or information againſt them, and *without* confronting them with witneſſes, notwithſtanding that they pleaded that they had witneſſes of their Innocency, thought them-

themſelves obliged to ſeek for *redreſs at Court* by way of *appeal* for *redreſſing of abuſes*, and to make known their grievances there, as well for their *making of factions* at the Election, as for the *diſorderly conduct* of the *Cordeliers*, and the *ill government* of the *Abbeſs* both as to the *Spiritual*, and *Temporall* concerns of the Houſe. Upon theſe complaints the Court by a Decree of the 15 *May* 1664. remitted them to my Lord *Arch-biſhop of Sens* their natural Prelate, and ordained, That whatſoever ſhould be done, and ordered by him ſhould be put in execution, *notwithſtanding any oppoſition, or appeal* whatſoever to the contrary. Theſe *Nuns*, in conformity to the wiſe proviſion of this Decree, preſented their requeſt to my Lord *Arch-biſhop of Sens*, that he would pleaſe to come over to them to do them juſtice.

Then it was that many of the *Nuns* in the Houſe, who had for a long time groaned under the diſorders that the

Cordeliers

Cordeliers had committed in their Houſe, and who had very paſſionately wiſhed, that it would pleaſe God to withdraw from under *their Tyranny*, now thought themſelves obliged to declare themſelves, and to make uſe of this favourable occaſion, which God had put into their hands, for the regaining of their liberty. They united themſelves therefore with their *Siſters*, and with them did unanimouſly preſent a new requeſt to this *Prelate*, to beſeech him, in execution of the Decree to come over to their Monaſtery to inform himſelf of the diſorders of the *Religious Fathers*, and of the truth of thoſe things which they had ſpecified in their requeſt.

But neither did they ſtop there: Their number being encreaſed according as their good intentions came to be better known to their *ſiſters*, they drew up a *ſolemn Act* ſigned by the hands of *ſeventeen Nuns of the Quire* the moſt *ancient* amongſt them, by which they voted

amongſt

amongſt themſelves, *To petition my Lord* Arch-biſhop of Sens *in all humility to receive them under his juriſdiction and conduct, ſeeing that the diſorders of the* Cordeliers *both in their Spiritual and Temporal concerns were grown to ſuch an height.* In this *Act* they alſo mutually engaged not to ſeparate, or diſunite themſelves in the good deſign which God had put into their minds to eſtabliſh *good diſcipline* in their Houſe; and for this end to make all earneſt endeavour and ſuit to effect it, to give *unanimous conſent* to all that ſhould be thought neceſſary for it, and to beſeech my Lord *Archbiſhop of Sens* not to forſake them in this good deſign, and to give them his protection for the compleat execution of it.

My Lord *Archbiſhop of Sens* conſidering the duty of his Character to watch over theſe *Religious Maids* for the good of their Souls, and that he ought to be ſo much the more ſenſible of this obligation, as they were more

earneſt

earneſt in begging his aſſiſtance in their extremity, came over to their Nunnery, began his *viſitation* there the 3*d of September* 1664, drew up their Declaration; and ſeeing that a part of the diſorders of the Houſe proceeded from an ill management of the Temporal revenues, and from the driving a Trade of blanching of linnen by the *Servitour-ſiſters* for people abroad, he took care to remedy that by wiſe and moſt judicious Orders. But as it had been no great matter to have made good proviſions for the *Temporal*, if he had not applyed his charitable cares to reform their *Spiritual* condition, eſpecially after he had particular informations from the *Religious Nuns*, of the ſtate of their Monaſtery and of the danger they were obnoxious to, if they were not put into a perfect *liberty of Spirit*, and if the *Authors* of ſo many horrible ſcandals were not removed from them, this *Prelate* thought himſelf obliged in Fatherly charity to furniſh

furniſh them with *Divines* which he approved of, *who* ſhould have the care of their Conſciences, *who* ſhould aſſiſt them in all their neceſſities, and adminiſter the Sacraments to them, and to forbid the *Cordeliers* doing any function of their Miniſtery without his *expreſs permiſſion*, and that under his hand.

This he did by a *new Order* of the 10 *of February* 1666 by which he enjoyned the *Nuns* to receive for their confeſſour *Monſieur Bourree, Dr. of the Faculty of Paris*, whoſe ability, life, exemplary manners, and charitable zeal were fully known to him; and commanded the *Cordeliers* forthwith to leave the Houſe, which they had involved in ſuch horrible diſorders.

The *greateſt* and *ſoundeſt* part of the *Nuns* ſubmitted with joy and comfort to the Orders of their *Prelate:* But ſome others to the number of *nine* or *ten* of the *Quire*, engaged by no body knows

knows what falſe Maximes, to ſay no worſe, to the intereſt of the *Cordeliers*, made oppoſition againſt them together with the *Servitour-ſiſters*, whom the *Cordeliers* had managed for ſuch a kind of deſign a long while before, and whom they had won over to their party by making them equall to the *Religious* of the *Quire againſt all order*, and by allowing them all kind of Liberties *againſt their vowes of Confinement and Poverty*, and *againſt* the particular obligations of their quality.

Upon the refuſal of theſe *nine* or *ten Maids*, there was iſſued out a Decree of the 24 *of March* 1666, by which it was enjoyned that the Orders of my Lord *Archbiſhop of Sens* ſhould be put in execution according to their form and tenour. This Decree was backed with another of the 14 *of April* following, by which the united *Nuns* being received as *Appealers from the abuſe* of a pretended obedience to the *Commiſſary General* given to *F. Houdry*

Houdry a *Cordelier*, and of certain pretended *Bulls of exemption* from the Juriſdiction of the *Ordinary* in favour of the *Religious Maids* of St. *Clare* denounced to them under the penalty of *Excommunication* to the prejudice of the Decrees of the *Court*, the Orders of my Lord *Archbiſhop of Sens*, were confirmed a-new, and the *Lieutenant General* of *Provins* enjoyned to give his aſſiſtance to the execution of thoſe Orders.

Thoſe abſolute Commands, which came from an Authority which all ought to reverence, inſtead of opening the eyes of theſe *nine or ten Religious Maids*, and making them liſten to the reaſons that perſwaded the *Court* ſo effectually to maintain the Order of my Lord *Archbiſhop of Sens*, ſerved to no better purpoſe, than to make them give clear evidence of that ſpirit of *Rebellion*, with which the *Cordeliers* had inſpired them. It was therefore neceſſary to have recourſe to the *Lieutenant*

nant Generall of *Provins* and that the *Eldeſt Counſellour* of that *Court* ſhould come over to the *Monaſtery* of St. *Catharine* the 18. *of Aprill*, in Execution of this laſt Decree to ſettle the *Sieur Bourree* in the *Ordinary Houſe* of the *Confeſſors* of this *Monaſtery*, in ſpite of all the oppoſition of theſe *nine* or *ten Nuns*. Such a publick Contempt of My Lord *Archbiſhop of Sens*'s Orders, and ſo notorious a Violation of the Juſt Authority of his Sacred Character, could not but raiſe a *very reaſonable* Indignation in him, and one would think ſhould have drawn down upon the heads of theſe *nine* or *ten Nuns*, the Thunder which God had put into his *hands*. But this *Prelate* conſidering, that their Obſtinacy proceeded from their Errours, and the falſe Maxims that the *Cordeliers* had inſtilled into them, rather than from any deliberate malice, reſolved to try all poſſible wayes of *Sweetneſs* and *Charity*, to reduce them to a Senſe of their duty. He therefore

took care to have that particular obedience, to which they were obliged by their Vows, and the hainousnes of that Sin, which making them violate those Vows would make them lose the quality of the *Spouses of Jesus Christ*, represented unto them. He moreover provided to have it *remonstrated* unto them, how unwarrantable those strange Heats were, and that violence of spirit, which they had added to this disobedience, and which deserved an *Exclusion* from the *graces* that God has united to the *Sacraments of his Church*; and a separation from the *Society and Communion of his Holy Family*. And finally, he made it be declared to them, with that *Fatherly Authority*, which God had given him for their concern, That he was most tenderly inclined for their *Spiritual* welfare; but withall, that he did most perfectly abhor their *Rebellion*: That he would root that out to the preservation of their Souls, and that after he had waited for their Repentance

pentance with patience, and uſed the admonitions which *Charity* required of him, he ſhould be conſtrained at laſt to make uſe of the ſharpeſt remedies to penetrate into, and ſo to diſſipate that hard Tumour of their hearts.

But all theſe *Charitable Remonſtrances* were wholly ineffectual. The *Servitour-Siſters* continued their unlawfull commerce, and the *nine* or *ten Siſters of the Quire* remained ſtill as pertinacious, and obſtinate in refuſing to acknowledge *Mounſieur Bourree* their *Confeſſour*. And as if the *Cordeliers* were afraid leſt theſe *Maids* by doing their duties, and frequenting the *Sacraments*, ſhould come to be ſenſible of the precipice they had engaged them in, they perſwaded them to abſent themſelves wholly from them: and all the care that My Lord *Archbiſhop of Sens* could uſe to make them come to theſe Solemnities, and the goodneſs he ſhewed them in offering them *Confeſſours* of any of the other *Religious Orders* to

draw them to it, could not prevent them from letting *Eaſter-day* paſſe without receiving the *Communion*. That *Prelate* threatned them with the penalties incurred by the *Holy Canons*, if they acquitted not themſelves of a duty, which he made appear to them was ſo indiſpenſible. They had *three* Admonitions for it according to the cuſtome. They returned no other anſwer to all this, but *injurious Language* and *Contempt*. And in fine, after a tedious Expectation of their Repentance, having declared to them in the uſual form, that they had incurred *Excommunication*, they behaved themſelves ſo haughtily, that their Siſters, who were more ſenſibly affected at that violent and ſtubborn Deportment, with which they oppoſed the *good Order* that was intended to be ſettled in the Houſe, than at the *particular Injuries* which they had received from them, having informed the Court of it, and preſented a *Petition*, to which

was

was joyned a *Declaration* of all that had paſſed; The *Court* by a Decree of the *5th. of September*, 1666. remitted them to My Lord *Archbiſhop of Sens* to be redreſſed by him by all wayes due and reaſonable, and even to the carrying away of ſuch *Nuns* as he ſhould think fit into other Monaſteries: Did enjoyn the *Lieutenant General of Provins*, and others the Kings Officers, to aſſiſt the ſaid Lord *Archbiſhop* with the *Secular Arme*, and the Kings *Deputy-Attourney* to give his Ayd. My Lord *Archbiſhop of Sens*, ſeeing himſelf forc'd by their obſtinacy to put this Decree in Execution, did cauſe ſome of them to be carried into other Monaſteries. They then began to abandon their former *ſtubbornneſs*, and to acknowledge the voyce of their *true Paſtor*: And as they were now no longer beſet with the *Cordeliers*, who made them ſtop their Ears, and who encouraged them in this their *Rebellion*, they had no ſooner had the taſte of this *happy liberty*,

which was procured them by delivering them out of a place where they were held Captives, but they acknowledged the need that their Houſe ſtood in of the Remedy which was applyed to thoſe wounds, that the *Religious Fathers* had given to their *Diſcipline*; the neceſſity of my Lord *Archbiſhop of Sens's Orders*, and the Juſtice of the Decrees of the *Court* that had confirmed them. They therefore preſently wrot to this *Prelate* to beg his pardon for the diſobedience which a *falſe Zeal* for their *Rule* had made them commit, and to aſſure him of the good diſpoſition they were in to ſubmit themſelves to his Orders, and to acknowledge him for their *lawful Superiour*. And *not only* thoſe who were carried out to other *Monaſteries*, *but* even thoſe who ſtayed ſtill at St. *Catharines*, did by *publick Acts*, and before *Notaries*, proteſt the *Nullity* of all that they might have done, or ſigned to the contrary. But the *Cordeliers*, who whileſt theſe

nine

nine or *ten Nuns* did make profeſſion of ſo much reſolution to retain them ſtill in their Houſe, had *ſeveral times* made a ſhew of leaving them to themſelves, not conſidering with themſelves, that theſe *Nuns* being no longer managed by them would ſoon return to their duty, and would not fail to execute that themſelves, which the *Fathers* did but make a ſhew of doing, betook themſelves to other *Artifices* to maintain themſelves in the *Uſurpation* they had aſſumed in making themſelves the *Directours* of this Monaſtery.

For this purpoſe they undertook two things *equally contrary* to the *Laws* of the Land, the Priviledges of the *Gallicane* Church, and to the *Authority of Parliament*: The one under the name of the *Procuratour General* of the *Order*; and the other under the name of the *Nuns* of St. *Catharine*. Under the name of the *Procuratour General* of the *Order* they addreſſed themſelves to the *Congregation* of the *Regulars* at *Rome*,

where thinking to elude the Execution of the Decree *of the 15th. of May*, 1664. and of those others issued out since, by which the *Nuns* of St. *Catharine* are remitted to the *Archbishop of Sens*, they procured a Decree bearing, That that *Prelate should have a time assigned him to be heard, That in the mean while the Censures pronounced by him should be taken off, and that the Monastery should continue under the Conduct and Jurisdiction of the Cordeliers.*

Under the name of the *Nuns of* St. *Catharine*, they obtained of their *General* a Commission, by which *Father Pinault Warden of the great Convent at Paris*, is fully empowered to reform the *Nuns* of St. *Catharine*, to correct them, to govern them, and to give them *Religious Fathers* for Confessours; And they are all commanded under penalty of *Excommunication* to obey him, and to acknowledge him *Commissary*; which is in *plain terms* to make all that is dependant, and undecided in the Court,

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to be judged at R*ome* by their *General*, without any cognizance of the cauſe, and without hearing of the parties.

The Religious Siſters of St. *Catharine*, being acquainted with the private intrigues of the *Cordeliers*, met in *Chapter* the 5*th. of February* 1666. and did to the Number of twenty of *them*, all *Nuns of the Quire*, reſolve to preſent a Petition at *Court* to get a Decree, by which My Lord *Archbiſhop of Sens* ſhould be declared *Superiour* of their Houſe, with a prohibition to all others to diſturb, or hinder him in the Poſſeſſion and Juriſdiction of this right: And the 4*th. of Auguſt* the ſame year, it being noiſed abroad, That F*ather Pinault Warden of Paris*, had got the Kings Letters Patents upon the pretended Commiſſion of the F*ather General*, they preſented a new Petition to My Lord A*rchbiſhop of Sens*, ſigned by *twenty Nuns*, all *profeſſed* of the *Quire*, to requeſt him in all Humility, to receive them once more under his Protection, and immediately to

to come over to their *Monaſtery*, to ſettle the *Regulations* there, which he ſhould find *neceſſary*, as he had already began to do. And that they might omit nothing, that might contribute to the procuring them ſo *Powerful* an Aſſiſtance againſt the miſchiefs with which they ſaw themſelves over-run; *On the twentieth of the ſame Moneth*, they oppoſed the Regiſtring of the *Letters Patents*, which might have been impoſed upon them upon this pretended Commiſſion from the *General*: and on the *thirteen of November* they *appealed* as from the *abuſe* of this ſame *Commiſſion*; and on the *ſeventeenth*, they ſignified their *Appeal* to *Father Pinault*. But becauſe they had not as yet made their *Appeal* as from an *abuſe* of the pretended Decree of the *Congregation*, obtained by the *Procuratour General* of the *Order*, not imagining that in *France* there ought any regard to be had to a Grant, ſo *contrary* to the rights of the *Biſhops*, and to the Maxims of both

Civil

Civil and *Eccleſiaſtick Law*; they preſented a new Petition to the *Court* on the 29*th. of the ſame November*, 1666. Upon which by a Decree *of December the ſecond*, they were received *Appealants*, as from an *abuſe* of the beforementioned pretended Decree of the *Congregation*: and it was ordered in theſe terms; *That the Declaration of the Viſitation, and Hearings of the ſaid Religious Siſters made, and received by the ſaid* Archbiſhop of Sens. *ſhall within a moneth be brought to the Civil Office of the Court, the Clerk to be obliged to do it by all due and reaſonable ways, and in the mean while prohibited to put the ſaid Decree of the Congregation in Execution, as alſo againſt the Archbiſhop's making his appearance upon any ſuch aſſignations, which might be ſet him in vertue of that Decree; and Ordered that thoſe undernamed,* Hubert, *Apoſtolick Notary*, Brugare *and* Meſſagio, *Notaries of* Provins, *who ſignified that Decree, ſhall be appointed to appear at Court, to anſwer to the Articles*

Articles that the Attourney-General may draw up againſt them, for having dar'd againſt the Duty and Obligation of their place to ſignifie a Decree, which does ſo openly wound the Liberties of the Gallicane Church, *and the* Laws of the Realm.

This is the ſtate of the Affairs of the *Nuns* of St. *Catharine*, and whither all the ſuits they have made at *Court* for theſe *two years* do tend, that is, to be diſcharged of the direction of the *Cordeliers*, and to return under that of my Lord *Archbiſhop of Sens*, who is their *Lawful* and *Natural Superiour*: And this is that which is here deſign'd to be Juſtified, by making it appear that theſe *Two Pleas* are agreeable to all the *Rules* of the *Church*, and to the particular Obligations of theſe *Nuns*: That the *State* and *Religion* are concerned in it, and that Reaſons, which to them ſeem *Invincible*, and which reſpect the *Glory of God*, and the *good of their Souls*, will not ſuffer them to neglect them.

SECTION

SECTION II.

The firſt Plea of the Nuns *of St.* Catharine, *which is to return under the Conduct and Juriſdiction of My Lord* Archbiſhop of Sens, *their Lawful Prelate.*

THE *Nuns* of St. *Catharine* have ſuch powerful reaſons to live under the Government and *Direction* of my Lord *Archbiſhop of Sens*, their lawful *Prelate*, that one can ſcarce comprehend how they come to be engaged under any other *Conductors*, nor by what Charm they have been kept in ſubjection to that of the *Cordeliers*, who have made themſelves *Maſters* of the Government of their Houſe. For beſides the reaſons in general, which do ſubmit, as ſhall be made appear, all *Religious Houſes* to the *Biſhops*, they have ſuch particular ones from the nature of their Order, and the Maxims of their

their *Holy Founder*, that the Extravagant diſorders, which have been committed in their Monaſtery under theſe *Mercenary and Self-intereſted Paſtors*, as we ſhall afterwards ſhow, cannot but be attributed to the Violation of all thoſe *Holy Rules*.

Here follows a Diſcourſe of above Eighty pages, to prove that of Right all Religious Houſes belong to the Juriſdiction of the Biſhops, *and not to any Monaſtical Superiours, which being likely to prove very tedious to Engliſh Readers, was thought fit to be omitted: The Heads of the Chapters are theſe that follow.*

SECTION III.

That Religious Houſes *cannot be withdrawn from under the Juriſdiction of the* Biſhops, *and that whatſoever Exemptions have been granted them, the* Biſhops *notwithſtanding are their Lawful Superiours.*

SECTION

SECTION IV.

That the Order of St. Francis *was in its firſt Inſtitution ſubmitted to the* Biſhops; *and that it was the intention of that* Holy Founder, *it ſhould always continue under that Subjection.*

SECTION V.

That it is far from the mind of St. Francis, *that the* Religious Siſters of St. Clare, *ſhould be under the Conduct of the* Friers Minors.

SECTION VI.

That although the Friers Minors *a little after the ſetting up of the Order of the* Nuns of St. Clare, *did inſinuate themſelves into the Government of their Monaſtery, they were notwithſtanding always under the Juriſdiction of the* Biſhops.

SECTION

SECTION VII.

That the Nuns *of St.* Catharine, *were at their firſt Inſtitution ſubmitted to the* Archbiſhop of Sens.

SECTION VIII.

The Bulls alledged by the Cordeliers, *to maintain their pretended Juriſdiction over the Monaſtery of St.* Catharine, *are anſwered.*

SECTION IX.

The ſecond Plea of the Nuns of St. Catharine, *which is, to be diſcharged of the* Direction *of the* Fathers Cordeliers.

'TIs not enough to have proved, (as has been done.) That if the *Cordeliers* have had any Juriſdiction in the Monaſtery of *St. Catharine*, they have

have uſurped it againſt *the Rights*, which the *Holy Scriptures*, *the Councils*, and *all Tradition* do give My Lord *Archbiſhop of Sens*, and againſt the indiſpenſible Obligations that lye upon the *Nuns*, according to the mind of *St. Francis*, and the Rule of their Foundation to live under his *Conduct* and *Authority*. It muſt beſides be made appear, that they have rendred themſelves unworthy, upon the account of thoſe *Horrible Diſorders* committed by them in their Houſe, and that utter *Impoſſibility* there is of ever reſettling any *good Diſcipline* there.

SECTION X.

That the Cordeliers *have rendred themselves unworthy of Governing the* Nuns of St. Catharine, *by reason of those horrible Disorders they have committed in their Monastery.*

'TIs a certain *Maxim* in Law, That He that abuses a Priviledge granted him deserves to lose the Power he has in vertue of that Priviledge. *Privilegium meretur amittere, qui permissâ sibi abutitur potestate.* There need then nothing else be done, but to bring into *open view* the abuses, that the *Cordeliers* have committed of this pretended Jurisdiction over the Monastery of St. *Catharine*, to give undeniable proof that they deserve to lose it, although they had been lawfully possessed of it: and that they are wholly unworthy of bearing the stile of *Pastours* to these *Holy Sisters*; having

having all the Characters of thoſe miſerable *Mercenaries*, thoſe *Falſe Prophets*, thoſe *Thieves*, thoſe *Robbers*, who are mentioned in the *Holy Goſpel*; *To whom the ſheep belongeth not, who are cloathed like ſheep, but within are ravening Wolves; who enter not by the gate of the Fold*, that is, by the Order of the *Biſhop*, but climb over another way, that is, by the way of *Exemptions* and *Priviledges*, and come for nothing but to *ſteal*, *devour* and *deſtroy*. *Fur non venit niſi ut furetur, &c.*

SECTION XI.

The Diſorders that the Cordeliers *have committed in the Houſe of St.* Catharine, *as to the* Spiritual *concern.*

IT were to be wiſh'd for the Honour of the *Church* which ſuffers by all her diſorderly Children, that the *Cordeliers* would have made good uſe of the moderation, which had been ex-

erciſed towards them till now. There would then have been no neceſſity at this time to declare things which *Charity*, that *covers a multitude of Sins*, has ſo long concealed, and which ſeemed to have kept them ſecret from her own view, leſt *Zeal* ſhould oblige her in Juſtice to proſecute the *Authors* of them. But 'tis found too plain, as it ſhall ſoon be ſhown, that this *long Patience* hath ſerved to no other purpoſe, than to make them the more *inſolent*, and to give them liberty to carry their *Exceſſes* to ſuch an height, as has rendred them the ſcandal not only of *one Town*, or *one Province*, but of the *whole Church*.

To be able to conceive an *Idea* of it in general, *one need but* repreſent to ones Fancy all the miſchiefs that *humane paſſions* are capable of producing when they are cover'd with *pretences of Piety*, and abuſe the moſt *Holy* and *Sacred* things to ſatisfie their own inclinations, and as much as in them lies, to

corrupt

corrupt poor innocent Souls. *One need but* fancy all the moſt ſhameful and baſe ways, that may be made uſe of to overthrow *good diſcipline* in a *Religious Houſe.* In fine, *One need but* imagine all the abuſes, which people that are not reſtrained either by the fear of God or man can commit, of an *Authority* which they have *uſurped*, and which they employ to inſpire Viciouſneſs, and to ſet up Wickedneſs in full power. And *one need not* fear that theſe general *Idea's* ſhould be either *too high* or *too large*, ſeeing that theſe *Fathers* have *this unhappy advantage*, That the Wit of man is not capable of *imagining that* which they are capable of *committing.* For that reaſon, as their Extravagancies exceed all imagination, there ſhall be nothing ſaid of their Diſorders here, but what is faithfully drawn out of their own writings, and the depoſitions of a great number of the *Nuns.* And beſides, there ſhall be ſo much condeſcenſion ſhown in their be-

half as not to *name them openly*, whenever it ſhall appear neceſſarily to particularize any of their Diſorders: and thoſe Actions ſhall be ſuppreſſed, which could not be mentioned without doing *violence to Modeſty*.

The Education of Penſioners.

THE Firſt care of thoſe who deſign to make Vertuous and *Religious Nuns*, is to bring them up as ſoon as poſſible in the Fear of God, and to withdraw them in their tendereſt years from the Vanities of the World. But as the *Cordeliers* who have had the *direction* of the Monaſtery of Saint *Catharine* have had ends far enough diſtant from this, ſo have they taken different meaſures; and their firſt care on the other ſide has been to inſpire the *young Virgins*, who were ſent to penſion in this Houſe, with a *ſpirit of Wantonneſs* and *Libertiniſm*, and to incline them

them from their tendereſt infancy, to love to be *Careſſed* and Courted. See how one of theſe *Siſters* ſpeaks in her depoſitions." The Education that they "gave was moſt pernicious: The *Con-*"*feſſours* ſpent their time in careſſing "the *Penſioners* that were ſent them "to be inſtructed for the Holy Com-"munion, and entertaining them with "all kind of ridiculous ſtories. When "upon occaſion they went to the *Fa-*"*thers* Convent, they uſed all kind of "*unſeemly privacies* with them, to take "away from them that Modeſty that "is natural to their Sex, and ſo early "enough diſpoſe them to be after-"wards the more complaiſant to them. "The *Ancienteſt* and the moſt *Reverend* "amongſt them appointed their *Novi-*"*ces* to entertain thoſe *Penſioners*, "whoſe inclinations were moſt ſuited "to theirs: They gave them names of "Kindred, and from time to time "made them give them viſits to "foment their Intimacy, and to give

"one another mutual aſſurances by "*Words*, by *Preſents*, and by *Collations*. "This was the foundation, upon which "they laid their *Education of Youth*, "and which in my opinion might eaſily "convince them of what has been "done ſince in their riper years, having "taken ſuch timely care to perſwade "the *young Virgins* that all theſe things "were innocent.

Education of Novices.

"THey were not content to in-"ſtil ſuch dangerous inclina-"tions as theſe into the *young* "*Virgins*, but took care alſo to foment "and cheriſh them according as they "advanced in years. And whereas in "other Monaſteries the time of *Novi-*"*ciate* is that, wherein they apply them-"ſelves moſt to thoſe who deſign to "enter into the *Religion*, and acquaint "them with all the leaſt appearance of

"a

"a Religious ſeverity, the *Cordeliers* "on the other ſide made it their buſi- "neſs to divert the Miſtreſſes of the "*Novices*, from informing them of the "obligations of a Religious Life, "which they conceal'd from them "with a great deal of care, that whilſt "they put them upon ſome trifling or- "dinary Obſervances, they might not "loſe any thing of that *ſpirit of Wan-* "*tonneſs* and *Vanity*, which they had "endeavoured to inſpire into them be- "fore the time of their *Noviciate.* I "can affirm, as having aſſured know- "ledge of it, that *Three Novices* ready "to be profeſſed, having been with "*Father N. Confeſſour*, to be inſtructed "in order to this Sacred Action, He "made them an hundred idle Comple- "ments of Love, and gave every one "of them a token of his Affection, ob- "liging them to wear them; gave them "very earneſt advice to get them good "Intimates amongſt the *Fathers*, tel- "ling them that it was very conveni-

"ent

"ent for the F*athers*, keeping them "from going to the *Tavern*, and diver- "ting entertainment for themſelves to "make them paſſe their time *pleaſant-* "*ly*, and gave them very particular "ſilly Inſtructions about the way to "manage theſe *Intimacies*. He deſi- "red one of the three to retire pri- "vately, that he might acquaint her "with the *Paſſion he had* for her, when "he gave her *Holy Water* at the great "*Grate* of the Church; That he reſer- "ved himſelf for her, That if it were "the Rule of the Houſe, that the *Nuns* "ſhould not come to the *Grate* till four "years after that they had been pro- "feſſed, he would wait till then to "have her for himſelf. He told ano- "ther F*ather*, who alſo had an Inclina- "tion for this *Novice*, That he had no- "thing to do to pretend to her, that he "had reſerv'd her for himſelf. But "not having found in theſe *Novices* all "the compliance he could have wiſh'd, "he threatned to ſtop their *Profeſſion*,

"as

"as indeed he did endeavour, but to "no purpoſe. The *Siſters* being nigh "the time of their *Profeſſion*, were of- "ten ſent to *Father N.* the *Confeſſour*, "to be inſtructed by him in the Obli- "gations of the Religion. But he, "inſtead of acquitting himſelf of this "duty, talked to them of nothing but "*Love*, and to effect it with more ſuc- "ceſs, he often entertained them in "private, and gave them *Medals* with "knots of *Ribbons* of divers colours, "according to the *variety* of his incli- "nations, making them promiſe him to "wear them for his ſake. And per- "ceiving once that they had not put "them on, he was in ſuch a rage, that "he threatned to keep them from their "*Profeſſion*, which he ſet himſelf on "work to do, by perſwading their "*Miſtreſs*, that they were not well in- "ſtructed in the things which were ne- "ceſſary for them to know. He called "*Siſter N.* his *Inclination*; *Siſter N.* "his *Sweeting*; *Siſter N.* his *faithful Con-*

"*fident.*

"*ſident.* Theſe were the ſubjects of "his *Entertaines* with them. Some *No-*"*vices* having been ſent to receive In-"ſtruction of the *Confeſſour*, he inſtead "of preparing them to the *Sacrament*, "of a true Religious Vocation, gave "them for a conſtant rule, to make "themſelves ſenſible of the *Love* he "bore them. For tokens of the ar-"dent zeal of his *Love* to them, he "gave them *Ribbons* of *Fire-Colour*, "*blew*, *green*, and other colours, that "were ſignificative of his *paſſion*, enga-"ging them above all to come to the "*Holy Water*, the better to *encourage* "him to *ſing Maſs*: And that he might "have them daily at his *grate*, he "blamed the *Mother Governeſs* for the "unpreparedneſs of theſe *Novices*, to "oblige her to ſend them to him un-"der this falſe pretence of *Piety*.

of

Of the young Profeſſed Nuns.

ONe may Judg by what has been ſaid about the manner of the *Cordeliers* inſtructing the *Novices*, what meaſures they took with the young *Profeſſed* Nuns. In effect, it were ſtrange if they ſhould not have taken all kind of liberty before them, ſince now they feared not, That Modeſty would make theſe *Maids* leave the Houſe to avoid the ſnares that were laid for their Chaſtity. "*A young Profeſ-*
"*ſed Nun*, who had taken very ſtrong
"reſolutions (by the aſſiſtance of Gods
"*Grace*, and the Inſtructions of a *Di-*
"*vine* that was a friend of her Family)
"never to entertain any communica-
"tion with the *Cordeliers*, upon occa-
"ſion found her ſelf engaged to ſee
"one of them, and to entertain him.
"And becauſe ſhe ſtood very cauti-
"ouſly upon her guard; this *Corde-*
"*lier* gave her an hundred reproach-
"ful

"ful taunts. He told her, that such a "kind of reserved life was fit enough "indeed for meer *Innocents*; but that "it was pity, that she should affect such "*preciseneſs*: That she was *too well made* "both in body and mind, to hide her "self from the World: That when "she came to be a little more advanced "in years, she would run into despair "for not having *improved her parts*, or "had the pleasure of being *Loved*; and "to this he added all that might make "impression upon the inclinations of a "*young Virgin*.

Books allowed.

But yet they thought it not sufficient to make use of such kind of discourse as this, to draw off the young *Nuns* from doing their duty, and insensibly to ingage them in vitious inclinations. They brought them *Romances* and *Plays* to read, and all other books that might choak the sentiments of

of Piety in them, and make them eaſily ſuſceptible of the Affections which they endeavoured to cheriſh in them. Their *Paſſion* beſotted them ſo far, as to make them give the *Nuns*, *The Maxims of Love*, *The School of Maids*, *The Catechiſm of Love*, whch are moſt abominable pieces, and which one may ſay, were ſuggeſted by the *Devil* of *Impurity*. Nay they have even given them books of *Magick*, and full of an infinite number of infamous and diabolical ſecrets: And one of them was ſo *beaſtly*, as to give a Nun a Character to write naſty things withal.

Inſtructions.

To theſe Books they added *Inſtructions*, which were not leſs impudent. "They have been heard at the "*Grate* an infinite number of times to "*ſing Laſcivious ſongs*, and one could "ſcarce go thither when they were "there, without hearing ſome ſottiſh "thing

"thing or other. Once in a pretty "round company, upon a refusal made "by a *Nun* to put her fingers through "to one that desired her, he fell to a- "buse her, and told her that she must "know, that all from the middle up- "wards was so wholly at the disposal "of their particular Friend, that he "was not to be refused, neither the "sight, nor the handling of them. Our "*Mothers Governesses* have assured me, "and many others of our Ladies, that "the *Cordeliers* gave them this for a "lecture that 'twas to be well practi- "sed, That the *Bosome*, the *Mouth*, "and the *Hand*, must be their particu- "lar Friends. A *Sister* complaining "to a *Cordelier* that they talked so "freely of immodest things, He told "her, that it was not *so great a sin* as "she made account of; That in the "*Primitive Church* every one gave "the *Kisse of Peace*, and that it was not "forbidden but upon the account of "those that abused it.

"*The*

"the ſame perſon telling another *Fa-*
"*ther*, That ſhe wondred that *Prieſts*
"dare preſent themſelves before the
"Altar, in the midſt of ſuch communi-
"cations; That for her part, the meer
"ſhame of confeſſing ſuch actions, were
"enough to withold her from them:
"He told her, That theſe things being
"not done for any ill end, but only
"to expreſs the tenderneſs of their
"*Friendſhip*, it was at the moſt but a
"venial Sin.

Preſents.

"Theſe *Inſtructions* were backed
"with *Preſents*, which reliſht of nothing
"but *Vanity* and *Libertiniſme*. *Father*
"*N.* (when our *Confeſſour*) deſired of-
"ten to ſpeak with two *Nuns*, to enter-
"tain them with profeſſions of his
"*Friendſhip*, and gave them *wet and*
"*dry ſweet-meats*, to oblige them to
"comply with him, and to ſatisfie his
"unlawful deſires. *Father N. Rival*

" *of Father N.* gave his picture drawn " as a *Gentleman* to *Siſter N.* and made " that *Lady* be drawn as a *Pallas*. O- " thers as great *Gallants* as theſe gave "them *Rings*, *Gloves* trimmed with " *Ribbons*, *Watches*, *Looking-glaſſes*, " *Seals*, wherein they engraved their " Ciphers, and the firſt letters of their " Names, interwoven with Motto's " and Emblems that expreſſed their " *Paſſion*: And for fear they ſhould " not comprehend the myſteries of " them, they accompanied them with " paſſionate Letters and Verſes which " did unriddle them. See how one of " the moſt reputed amongſt theſe *Fa-* " *thers*, has explained them in one of " his Poſies and dear Letters which is " under keeping.

LETTER.

" My Heart is *wholly yours*, *wholly in* " *you*, *and wholly for you*, ſeeing it lives " only for you. Doubt not of it no " more

"more than of thoſe *Oaths* which I "have made to you, and which I now "renew to you, to Honour you *with-* "*out Equal* and *without End*. 'Tis "the *Device*, which I have cauſed to be "graved upon one of the Seals which "I ſend you, of the Ciphers of our "names interwoven; which in its firſt "part expreſſes the high and ſingular "eſteem I make of your Affection: "The other part expreſſes the durati- "on of it, which ſhall have no end, no "more than the ardour of my Affecti- "on, and the abſoluteneſs of my ſub- "miſſion ſhall have bounds.

"As you have moſt *Af- "fectionately given me up

* Amoureaſement.

"your Arms, and as I have received "them and kept them by me, becauſe "the Caske becomes not your Sex, "which ought never to conceal the "Charms of their face and eyes; and "beſides, becauſe I ſhould be ſorry "that thoſe that ſhould ſet upon *N.* "ſhould find him unprovided of his

" Arms, and not able to defend him-
" ſelf, ſo now I ſend you them back a-
" gain in another Seal. As they con-
" ſiſt of two *flames and a bell*, the firſt
" of which make themſelves ſenſible
" by the effects of heat, and the other
" by ſound and noiſe, I have put for
" the Device; *more of Fire*: ſuppreſ-
" ſing the reſt, which would make up
" a perfect ſenſe: *More of fire than*
" *ſound*, that is to ſay, *more of effects*
" *than words*, *more of fruits than noiſe*,
" *more of paſſion than talk*, *more of love*
" *in the heart than in the mouth*. The
" *bell* alſo is *encloſed*, and covered
" with a *Chevron*, and though provided
" of its clapper, yet it is at reſt, to ſig-
" nifie, that it ſays not a word. The
" ribbon that ties them together with
" its three colours, expreſſes the qua-
" lity of our affections. You love the
" *Aſh-colour*, which ſignifies the *infini-*
" *ty of your love*. I have a fancy for the
" *White and Green*, the one of which
" ſignifies *fidelity*, *candour*, and *ſincerity*;

" the

" the other, *hope* and *encreaſe*. So that " beginning at yours, they ſing: *My* " *Love has no bounds, becauſe my fidelity* " *alwaies encreaſes*: beginning at the " white: *My fidelity ſhall alwaies en-* " *creaſe, and therefore my Love ſhall have* " *no end*: And at the Blew: *I hope that* " *my fidelity will acquire me a Love* " *without End*. Theſe Artificial pie- " ces of the workman, and theſe weak " productions of my own fancy, will " however acquaint you with that So- " veraign empire you have over my " will, and what conſtant employ- " ment you give my heart, which " thinks of nothing but of my *Conquer-* " *eſs* and *Soveragn*. I proteſt to you, " *moſt amiable Melita*, it is true, and if " it were in my power to give you any " conſiderable proofs of this truth, I " would ſoon put your mind out of a " capacity of ever doubting of it, and " your heart in a condition of feeling as " conſtant and tender inclinations for " *Thyrſis*, as he now wiſhes for his hap-

" pineſs and repoſe. I conclude with
" theſe ten *ill-made*, but *true* lines, ſpea-
" king to this pitiful Preſent.

Vous partez Avortons? Vous oſez hazarder?
Allez foibles efforts d'un Cœur plein de Courage;
Si Melite *pour vous auſſi bonne, que Sage*
A'l abord ſealement daign vous regarder
Voſtre bonlieur digne d' Envie
Allumera ma jalouſie.
Ne me derobez rien, ny du cœur, ny des Yeax:
Dites-luy ſettlement, que je ſuis tout en Elle,
Et jurez-luy pour moy ſur le plus grand Des Dieax,
Que je ſerray conſtant autant qu' elle eſt belle.

OR,

Dare you Abortives thus your Fortune try?
Go then weak ſallies of a Generous mind;

If

If you as *Good* as *Wiſe Melita* find.
T' allow you but one glance of a kind
Eye,
Your Happy Fortune will in me
Kindle the flames of jealouſie.
Rob me not either of her heart, or
Eye,
Tell her, in her I only live; and
ſwear,
Swear't for me by the greateſt Deity
That I'le be full as Conſtant, as ſhe's
Fair.

But theſe *Fathers* were not contented only at this rate, to employ ſuch profane ſtuff as this to win the hearts of theſe *Religious Siſters*: There was nothing that appeared any thing glorious in the world, which they did not make uſe of to corrupt them. See how one of them has turned the entry of the *King* and *Queen* into *Paris* into applications of flattery to his Correſpondent, where he ſays he was with the body of the Univerſity in his rank of *Doctour*.

LETTER.

"Seeing the *Queen* under the Cano-
"py of State and upon the throne, I
"wiſhed her the ſhape and meen of my
"*Soveraign.* Hearing the publick Ac-
"clamations, and the ſolemn vows they
"made for her, I wiſhed that the merit
"of *Melita* had been as much revealed.
"Nay ſometimes when I ſaw the *King*
"*enter his City*, I felt the *tranſports of*
"*my heart*, and the urgent efforts of my
"Soul carried forth to wiſh my ſelf a
"like happineſs, which would have
"compleated my felicity, if it had been
"with *leſs Pomp* and with *more ſecrecy.*
"Thus this whole pompous day was
"ſpent in a continual commerce be-
"twixt my eyes and my heart, applying
"all the glorious repreſentations that
"charmed the one to the Charms that
"triumphed over the other.

THESES.

THESES.

THey have ſometimes employed even things, which common decency and piety ſeemed to have ſecured from the attempts of their wicked paſſion: For to ſignalize it the more, they have even dared to dedicate *Theological Theſes* to them, borrowing to this purpoſe after a new-invented ſort of impiety, the pictures and qualities of the *Saints*, whoſe names they bore. This poſſibly could hardly be believed, if the very *Extracts* of their own *Letters* were not here produced.

LETTER.

"I am juſt now going to carry my "*Theological Theſes* to the Printer: I "muſt defend it the *ſixth of October*, "and I intend it ſhall be under your "*Patronage*. If I did not apprehend "the talk of people, I would ſet out

"your

"your name and merits in publick "upon the Title, and the Epiſtle De- "dicatory of the ſame *Theſes*. But I "will content my ſelf to dedicate it to "you tacitly, for the picture putting a "*Magdalen*, and for the Title theſe "words: *Multum Diligenti*, that is, *To "her who Loves much*— This is the "deſign, ſee now the execution of it in "another.

LETTER.

"*My Beloved Heart*, I deſire you im- "mediately upon the receit of this to "ſend to *Monſieur Michels* (*He is the "Meſſenger of* Provins,) you ſhall there "find that which I promiſed you, that "is, a piece of Satin with a dozen of "*Theſes*, which I ſend you to give to "your Friends. Send me word whe- "ther you have received them all, and "if there be nothing ſpoiled, eſpecially "the ſatin. If I were with you I would "have a Frame made to put it in. You

"will

"will find at the opening of the pac-
"quet a piece of my hand, which is an
"*Epiſtle Dedicatory*. I would have
"put it all in French, with your name
"in the preſs, and would have printed
"it ſo. But it is not time yet to take
"ſuch liberties. I believe you know
"the reaſon why. Although there be
"but one Title upon the *Theſes*, yet it
"makes a great many people talk
"who know the Miſtery of it, and to
"declare their ſenſe about it, and to
"ſay, that it is to you that I dedicate
"it. They muſt have very little wit
"if they ſhould judge otherwiſe, ſince
"the Title makes it clear enough to
"them. To teſtifie then that it is to
"you that I dedicate it, I was not con-
"tent to put thoſe two words only,
"which I ſent you notice of. I ſhould
"not have thought that I had ſuffici-
"ently gratified the *ardour* of my *Love*.
"And ſo I would put in all the Title,
"which you may now ſee, together
"with a picture of her, whoſe name
"you

"you bear. See then the explication "of the Title— To both the *Diſci-* "*ple and Miſtreſs of the Sacred Love,* "*Mary Magdalen,* who as a mark has "been ſtruck with the *Arrow of Love,* "and who reciprocally as another Ar- "row has ſtruck another mark: To "the *Well-beloved: To Her who has loved* "*much,* and *does love much:* To *the* "*Well-choſen*: To *Her who has made* "*choice of the better part, which ſhall* "*never be taken from her.* This is the "Explication of the Title, which may "be underſtood of the *Magdalen* in reſ- "pect of *Jeſus Chriſt,* of *Jeſus Chriſt* in "reſpect of the *Magdalen.* But I un- "derſtand them of *you* and *my ſelf* re- "ciprocally: Let them talk of it that "will. 'Tis too long a while ſince, "that I could but only wiſh for an op- "portunity of giving you a teſtimony "of the ſincerity of my heart: And "theſe are the leaſt teſtimonies I could give you of it. I hope one day to do more to aſſure you, that I *Love* you in "reality,

"reality, and not in appearance only,
"and that I am,

My beloved Heart,

your Engaged for ever.

One muſt be very curious about *profanations* and impieties, not to be ſatisfied with this; for 'tis not very eaſie for impiety to go higher, than to abuſe the words of the Goſpel and of *Jeſus Chriſt himſelf,* to expreſs a ſcandalous criminal paſſion by; and to borrow the *Idea* of the chaſteſt and pureſt Love that ever was, for to dedicate and ſacrifice, as one may ſay, the truths of *Divinity* to a ridiculous and abominable Love. And yet theſe are the *leaſt* teſtimonies of affection, that theſe *Fathers* thought they could give the *Nuns*, and made uſe of *Profanations* yet ſtill more impious and exorbitant.

SER-

SERMONS.

HOw *frequently* have they made the Talent that God gave them to preach his word, ſerve to entertain their infamous commerces? *How often* have they endeavoured by a moſt execrable profanation of this Divine Miniſtry to make the *Nuns* believe, *that it was they that animated them in their preaching, that encouraged them to undertake it, that upheld them in this painful work, and that they propoſed to themſelves nothing elſe, but the glory of pleaſing them.* See how one of them, when about to perform the *Lent-courſe* in a very conſiderable town, has expreſſed himſelf in one of his Letters.

LETTER.

"This does teſtifie to you, *Moſt dear* "*Melita*, that *Thyrſis* loſes no oppor- "tunity, whereby to aſſure you of "the

"the extraordinary pleaſure he finds
" in entertaining himſelf with her,
" whom he loves more then himſelf:
" His conſtitution, which is none of the
" ſtrongeſt, fills his mind with terrour,
" as often as he thinks of the approach
" of a five weeks labour, under the toil
" of which he foreſees either the ſhame
" of ſinking, or the danger of death it
" ſelf: He ſhuts his eyes againſt theſe
" diſaſters, and ſtops his ears aganſt the
" complaints of his head, and his lungs,
" by the ſtrength of that deſire he has
" to ſee before, and after theſe hard-
" ſhips; *the object that will animate him*
" *to undertake* them, and that will give
" him a ſweet conſolation after all his
" languor. If you are very well ac-
" quainted with the *incomparable Meli-*
" *ta*, you may aſſure her, that *it is none*
" *but her*, that can effect theſe wonders
" in an heart, that is more her's than its
" own. Nothing refreſhes this languiſh-
" ing creature in his continual indiſpo-
" ſitions, but the *Idea* of her perfecti-
" ons.

"ions. *'Tis to that*, that he makes "the moſt *pompous ſacrifices*: *'Tis to* "*that*, that he addreſſes his moſt *ſolemn* "*Vows*: *Tis that*, where he places his "*moſt affecting delights*: *Tis upon that*, "that he intends to ſet up his reſt, and "*without End*, and *without Change.*

MARRIAGES.

BUT they were not thus ſatisfied with the *Profanation* of a Miniſtry that ought to be ſo much reverenced: They carried their Sacriledge yet higher, by profaning the *Sacraments* and the moſt *Holy Ceremonies* of the Church. They had taken care ſo to contrive it, that *there ſhould not be one Nun* in the Houſe, that from her *Novice-ſhip*, that is, in an age, and at a time when ſhe durſt not oppoſe them, had not ſome *Cordelier* for her particular friend, and

and with whom alſo ſhe was made to contract a very intimate Alliance. This was done with all poſſible ſolemnity: and as for the future they were to call themſelves *Huſband* and *Wife*, according to an Order long ſince eſtabliſhed by them in the *Nunnery*. When they would make any new *Intimates*, they obſerved the ſame formalities, which were uſed in common Marriages. The *new Lovers* addreſſed themſelves to the kindred and friends of thoſe, that they deſired to encline to them. They gave pledges of their Affection, made *demands* and *conventions*: They aſſigned days to draw up the *Articles*, to make the *Contracts*, and at laſt the *Marriages*, where there was *jollity* and *feaſting*, and a *thouſand impertinencies* uttered.

"It is now *ſixteen*, or *eighteen* years "ſince, That *Father M. Cordelier* and "*Doctour of Paris*, being come to "court a *Siſter*, and to take her for "his *good Friend*, (*That was their Or-*"*dinary Character*) did ſcarce part

"from her for three days together, "the time that he ſtaied there. He "advanced his diſcourſe with her by "degrees, made inſolent propoſitions "to her, alledged thoſe unwarranta- "ble liberties, that *he had taken* with "the *Ladies* of the *N. Cordeliers*, to "her; and ſuch freedom as many of "his Order had told him they had ta- "ken in our Houſe, at which without "the *particular Grace of God*, ſhe had "yielded to him.

"Another Siſter after ſhe had been "courted a long while by *Father N.* at "preſent *Warden* of—— had all ſolem- "nities provided for her *Marriage*. A "*Cordelier* as the *Father* of *F. N.* de- "manded her of *M. N. the Abbeſs*, who "paſſed for the *Mother* of this Siſter: "*Father N. Cordelier* ſerved for the *No-* "*tary* to paſs the Contract: They pub- "liſhed the banes at the *Grate* of the "aforementioned Lady, and in the Hall "below. *Father N.* ſerved for *Curate*, "making them ſay *the very words*, and

"he

"he for his part reading the *ſame Pray-*
"*ers*, and uſing the *ſame Ceremonies*
"that are obſerved in *ordinary Marria-*
"*ges*. There was a *Ring* given, and
"put upon the finger of the *Bride*,
"*Siſter N.* diſguiſed like a *Cordelier*,
"made them an *exhortation* about the
"duties of Marriage, and after that,
"*he* and *ſhe* were ſent alone to another
"*Grate*, to *conſummate the Marriage* to-
"gether.

Entertainments.

THeſe Solemnities, which were *almoſt continuall*, never paſſed without all the *frolickeſt* humours that theſe *Fathers* could put themſelves in. They *eat together* at the *Grate*, They *drank together* in the ſame glaſs with hollow reeds: They *drank healths on their knees*, and *broke the glaſſes* after

they had drank them off: They made use of little Artifices to *lift up the Sisters Neckcloths*: They reproached them, that they were but *meer geese* in comparison of the *Ladies of the N.Cordeliers*, in whose *Nunnery* ten or twelve *Cordeliers* did *constantly lodge*. And after that cited the *debauches*, that were practised in other Houses of their Order, to excite them to imitate them.

From these Entertaines they proceeded to discourses, that were yet more *licentious & impudent*: They *danced* their parts to tunes that were sung to them: They *threw* off the *Cordeliers* habit, and dressed themselves in *Suits* of *Satin*, and *trimming of coloured Ribbon*: sometimes the *Cordeliers* gave the *Nuns* their habits, and the *Nuns* theirs to the *Cordeliers*: some of the *Nuns* at the *Friers* entreaty *disguised themselves like seculars*, and appeared before them at the *Grate*, with their *Necks naked*, and set *thick with patches*, as well as their *faces*. Others of them disguised themselves like *Comedians*,

Comedians, and *acted Plays* before them: And others were to be ſeen with *necklaces of Amber, yellow Tiffany Hoods*, with their hair *curled* upon their foreheads, and with neck-cloths, and vails of ſilk. In this condition they *played for kiſſes* at cards, and other idle games, till *five a clock* in the morning. They *brake the very Grates* to doe things with more eaſe, and they ſpent *whole days and nights* in theſe kind of entertainments.

If they were obliged to be long abſent from this Monaſtery they took care to maintain their correſpondence by *Letters*, where nothing was forgot that would ſerve to expreſs the heighth of their moſt ſhameful paſſions, or to debauch a mind, and make it ſenſible of *amorous Inclinations*. There are a great number of theſe Letters in keeping, whoſe Language is full of *prophaneneſs* and *impurity*, and in which theſe *Religious Fathers* talk of nothing but of *deſtiny* and *fate*, and of good and

bad fortune: Nothing but expreſſions of the bittereſt and moſt invective *jealouſie, proteſtations of fidelity* and *ſervices, complaints of the cruelty and indifference of* thoſe to whom they write.

LOVE LETTERS.

"One of them there treats her he "writes to, with the Title of *his Miſtris*; another with that of *his Soveraigneſs*: another calls his, *his Dutcheſs*, "another his, *his Princeſs*: another "his, *his Beloved*; another ſtiles his *his* "*Dear Heart*, another his *his deareſt* "*Gallant*, another his *his dear Confident*; "another writes to his *dear Comrade*, "another to *his Beloved Heart*, another "to his *little Dove*, another to *the In-* "*comparable One, that makes the ſubject* "*of his adoration.*

"The ſuperſcriptions are, *To her* "*whom I ſoveraignly honour: To my* "*Amiable cruel one, To the Victorious*

"Melita,

"Melita, *To my Dear Child, To the only*
"*ſubject of my moſt tender affections, To*
"*Her whom I think of, To my new Con-*
"*queſt, To the Loadſtone, that draws me*
"*to your ſelf, my Dear, To the moſt Ami-*
"*able, and moſt beloved of the Nymphs of*
"*the ſacred Mount.*

'Tis not hard to judge, of what ſtile the Letters might be that were wrot to Virgins, to whom they gave ſuch qualities as theſe, and whom they ordinarily called *Mardana*, or *Mariana*, or *Timaretta*, or *Cleopatra*, or *Melita*, according as the *Friers* fancied them to have any reſemblance with theſe *Heroinaes* in *Romances*. There ſhall be here ſome extracts of them ſet down, or at leaſt of ſome of them, that are the *leaſt impudent*, and the *moſt Ingenious* amongſt them, and ſuch as are written in the *moſt reſpectfull terms*. For, *as for the reſt*, they are *too beaſtly* and *impious* to be expoſed to the view of all the world.

LETTER.

"It is but juſt *Madam*, that you "ſhould ſerve for a *Sanctuary* for my "complaints to fly to, ſince that "you gave them birth, and that they "tend to no other end, but the cauſe "which produced them. I beſeech "you then condemn me not, if I open "my pain to you, and if I force my ſelf "to give you a ſmall *intimation of my* "*Love.* Give my ſpirit, that *lives only* "*for you*, ſome encouragement to its "purſuit: and if *Love* has made ſo fair "a compoſition as to *unite my heart to* "*yours*, I hope to enjoy *without Rival*, "the Glory of calling my ſelf, —

LETTER.

"—— This muſt be the ſubject of "one of your Letters, if you deſire to "make the happieſt man that lives: "you muſt acquaint me, if the *In-*

"*comparable*

" *comparable Timaretta* has not alto-
" gether forgot the *Unfortunate Sesostris.*

LETTER.

" ——— 'Tis not only, as you tell
" me in yours of the *sixteenth of May*,
" the effects of my *good nature*, and
" *Generosity*: No, you make *other*
" *kind of Impressions* upon me. *But I*
" *durst* tell you them, that I might not
" be contradicted in a thing, which I
" do tenderly cherish, and the bare *Idea*
" of which gives me satisfaction enough
" for ever suffering my self to be *diver-*
" *ted from it*, or to be undeceived.

LETTER.

" Is it possible, *Incomparable and*
" *Dear Timaretta*, that you should be
" strangely surprised at the sight of
" my Character. And is my *misfor-*
" *tune* so great, that for an involunta-
" ry,

"ry and forced silence, you could be "able to do me the injustice to think, "that I could live without *being wholly "yours, and wholly sacrificed to your "service.*

LETTER.

—"See now, we are in all ap- "pearance *sixscore leagues* distant one "from another, and consider whether "I be as near you here as I was at *Pro- "vins.* I know not whether I my self "*stayed behind* in that place, as I have "*brought you hither along* with me into "this. However I dare say, you ought "to have stopped me, and kept me "there, to be revenged of my *stealing* "you away, and that you might have "neer you one full of *Respect, Esteem,* "and *Reverence* for your merit.

LETTER.

—"You may assure her, whom "you know, that there is nothing in

"this

"this world that is *better beloved*, more "tenderly thought of, nor *more Religi-* "*ouſly adored*, than ſhe is in the heart "of that other perſon, of whom I am "ſpeaking.

LETTER.

—"Whatſoever *Idea* your Imagi- "nation may frame of my *Love*, believe "it, *my Deareſt*, it muſt be leſs, than "the reality of that paſſion that I have "for you. Injure me not ſo far as "to doubt of it, —chear up your "ſelf *my amiable One*, and let me bear "all the burden of *this Affliction*. It is "not reaſonable, that I ſhould be the "occaſion of the leaſt trouble to her, "who makes up *all the ſweetneſs* of my "life. — For mine own part I'le en- "deavour to ſweeten the trouble by "reflecting upon your worth, and your "relation to me, and the faithful teſti- "monies you have given me of it.

LETTER.

LETTER.

"—— But my candle is all melted: "*Midnight* has ſtruck. I'le go ſee if the "*Organ* can give me an entertainment "any thing nigh thoſe *agreeable delights*, "which you have made me reliſh in "your *Charming converſation.*

LETTER.

——"Though my Heart *ſwims* in "the mid'ſt of the *Waters*, and *baths*, "and *Minerals*, which I drink; yet I "feel not that they have quenched the "*leaſt ſpark of thoſe fires*, which yours "has kindled there. —— Alas that it "ſhould not be *as* * *able*, "*as affectionate*: with- "out doubt I ſhould live with more con- "tent, if it were ſo, becauſe I ſhould "give *you more ſatisfaction.*

* Auſſi puiſſant.

LETTER.

LETTER.

—— "Do not bemoan me, *fair N.* "The tears that *Heaven ſhed* ſomething "too plentifully at the time of our "ſhort interview, and the many waters "that fell, could not quench the flames, "which a *flaſh of Lightning from you* had "kindled in my ſpirits. None but my "ſelf ſhould be concerned at *my trou-* "*bles*, becauſe I did imprudently ſearch "for the occaſion of them: But the "cauſe of them *is too Lovely to be* ſorry "for the effects.

LETTER.

—— "I have but this moment —— to "proteſt to you, that if I had *as many* "*hearts as hairs*, I would carry them "all to be lodged in *the boſom of my* "*Deareſt, and moſt amiable Melita.*

LETTER.

LETTER.

—"Our Daughter has done very "prettily to ſend me thoſe two little "glaſſes. But I am not ſatisfied with "ſo little ſweetneſs, and do not let her "think to perſwade me "that ſhe * has every "thing little. I'le doubt "of it, till I have found it ſo by expe-"rience. Our Son's Ink is frozen, and "I hear no talk of him. Let her know, "he ſhall be ſoundly whipt, as ſoon as "he appears, and I do not know whe-"ther *ſhe* can ſcape it.

* Que elle ait tout petit.

LETTER.

—"Time is a great workman, as "he is a great Maſter. It has taught me "a great many things; but it was *ne-"ver* ſo favourable to me, as when it "made me know *Melita*, and her true "value, by the ſweetneſs of her Con-"verſation,

" verſation, and what ſhe can do, if ſhe
" pleaſe, to oblige thoſe perſons that
" ſhe has engaged to her. Whatſoever
" ſhe may merit, *though* ſhe had as many
" *Adorers*, as ſhe has *hairs*, that is, *chains*
" upon her head, and as many as ſhe
" has *rays*, that is, *darts* in her eyes:
" *yet Thyrſis* has the vanity to think,
" and ſay, That *he alone* will not yield
" to *all* that Troup, That his *heart* con-
" tains *as many fires* in it for her, as *all*
" thoſe put together could do; and
" *although* he ſhould yield to them in
" merit and good fortune, he thinks
" with juſtice that he ſhould carry it
" from them all in *Love* and *Fidelity*:
" So that it will always be true, That
" as the *amiable Melita* is *without Equal*,
" ſo the reſpects and tenderneſs of
" *Thyrſis* ſhall be *without End*. 'Tis by
" theſe *myſterious words*, *my Queen*,
" betwixt us two, that I would for the
" future conclude all my Letters, and
" I deſire the ſame favour of you. The
" firſt of theſe *Motto's* repreſents me the

" *Object*

"*Object* of my happineſs, and the "ſecond intimates the *extent* of the de- "voirs of your faithful and inviolable "*ſubject*. Adieu *my Queen, good morrow* "*my Soveraign*; *good night*, thou moſt "*faithfull* to the *happieſt* of *Shepherds*.

LETTER.

"You have, my *Amiable Melita*, a "very particular Grace in tickling the "paſſion of your *Faithfull* and *Sincere* "*Thyrſis*, by the charming aſſurances "you give him of preferring him be- "fore a *Cavalier* much worthier and "a fitter object for your Love, than "that *poor Shepherd*, whom *Age*, *Me-* "*lancholy* and *Infirmities*, have already "*made gray*. 'Tis this, that would "make him aſſure you of all his affe- "ctions, if he could have reſerved any "thing when he *ſacrific'd* his heart up- "on your *Altars*. Live then *my So-* "*veraign*, in full ſecurity of this poſ- "ſeſſion.

"ſeſſion. Put *Thyrſis* amongſt your "*Conqueſts*, though none of the richeſt "indeed, yet doubtleſs the moſt *abſo-* "*lutely* gain'd; and believe that nei- "ther *Death* nor *Time* ſhall ever inter- "rupt the duration of an engagement; "that this *Shepherd* makes accompt is "*eternal*. Keep your ſelf in good hu- "mour, and think upon the bounties "which you deſign *Fair Melita*, to "*Yours*, *Wholly Yours*, *Thyrſis*.

LETTER.

—"Speak the truth, ſhe reſembles "you, * ſhe is Fair all na- "ked as you.

* Elle eſt belle toute nue comme vous.

LETTER.

—"If the cold hinders you from "writing 'tis no matter, provided that it be not "at the *Heart*: for my "part, I am never cold in the * hidden "parts.

* aux parties caſtees.

LETTER.

— "The reading of your laſt has "excited a greater paſſion of Joy in "my heart, than I have felt theſe *ten* "*years*; I know not, whether I ought "to except even the moments I enjoy- "ed in the happineſs of ſeeing and "converſing with you. For in fine, "*my Dear Siſter*, I am of opinion, that "there is more ſweetneſs in a *little cor-* "*reſpondence*, than in a "**barren dry viſit* to her "that *one loves*. And it is "always the peculiar talent of your "ſex to make fewer advances in *Con-* "*verſation*, than upon "the **Paper*—— I am not "at all ungrateful, yet I "know very well, that I am not yet "*where I would be*, ſince you condemn "the *irregularity of ſome of my thoughts*.

* une viſite ſterile.

* Sur la papier. ——

LETTER.

LETTER.

—"You reproved me for having "wrote *I will*, and *I will not*, and you "call me *preſumptuous*. I remember "very well, *Melita*, how I made uſe of "thoſe imperious words. But in ſhort, "if you had but once in your life been "in *Love*, you would have found in this "manner of expreſſion *more of tender-* "*neſs* than *Authority*, *more of ſweetneſs* "than *Arrogance*— You are in the "right, *Melita*, you are to give *Laws* "for all things, not only for what paſ- "ſes betwixt you and me, but *to my* "*whole deſtiny alſo*— you would have "me believe that you are full of ac- "knowledgement, and an enemy to in- "gratitude. *Alas!* if you love me for "*no other* reaſon, but to avoid that "baſe vice, you *love me little enough*, "and after a very *languid manner*. "However I will acknowledge my ob- "ligation to you for that. How ſmall

"a part ſoever you can allow me in "your favour, I cannot claim it as due "to me, and it is a pure free gift. 'Tis "true I had reaſon to hope for *ſome-* "*thing more*, and I had all manner of "*probability* for it. But what? *appear-* "*ances* are very deceitful, eſpecially "*appearances* drawn from the *diſcourſe* "*of women.* Allow me this expreſſion "of my *anger*, and *trouble.* One, and "t'other have reduced me to a conditi- "on that would *make you pity me*, if "you ſaw it.

LETTER.

—"Although you be the *Sover-* "*aign* of my Will, you have given "birth to I know not what Rebelli- "ous motions in my Heart, which "*will not be ſatisfied* by you with ſuch "things as you undertake to ſtifle them "with. If it be ſo, *Melita*, and that I "am not able to rule them after your "way, be ſo good as to indulge *ſome-* "*thing to their Rebellion*, and to ſuffer them

"them for the future *to ſhow them-*
"*ſelves.*

LETTER.

— "There are ſo many marks of
"your goodneſs in the laſt lines you
"wrote to me, that if my paſſion were
"*never ſo little regulated,* very likely it
"would have nothing more to pretend
"to: and yet I find *I know not what,*
"*that enclines me to deſire of you ſome-*
"*thing beyond the paſſions of honour, eſt-*
"*eem, and gratitude: And, Siſter, do*
"*not object to me that injurious veil,*
"that covers a part of your Graces.
"*The little god, whom you know, has his*
"*veil too, as well as you, which ſuffers*
"*him not to take notice of the auſtere ha-*
"*bit which encloſes you.*

Sacrilege, and Profanations.

'TIS but too true, that the paſſion, that poſſeſſed theſe *Religious Fathers,* has *blinded* them to ſuch a

point, as to make them an *hundred times* forget themſelves, and as often thoſe to whom they diſcourſed. In effect, *can one* without an *extraordinary blindneſs* ſay to a *Nun* in the *very Tribunal of Penitence: my dear ſweeting, be confident, and then ſighing, Confeſs you of your cruelty, my Dear Heart.*

Can one without an *extraordinary blindneſs and impiety*, (demanding the Ornaments to ſay *Maſs* withal,) *fall down upon his knees* to a *Nun*, and tell her, *That ſhe is the firſt Deity that he would ſacrifice to?*

Can one without *extraordinary blindneſs, impiety, and beaſtlineſs*, when he is *Confeſſour*, and ſees a penitent give reaſons for ſcrupling *that amorous paſſionateneſs*, and *thoſe inſolent tranſports* that he acquaints her with, and that ſhe proteſts, *ſhe could not yield any compliance to what was propoſed to her, not knowing how to confeſs her ſelf of ſuch infamous* * *Contracts, if ſhe ſhould allow him, thereupon*

* Attouchemens.

upon *offer himself to learn her how to do it, and to give her a forme in writing to help her to confess her self of it.*

ENTRIES.

THere shall be no particular mention here made of *secret and nocturnal entries* into the Garden and Monastery by the help of *false keys*, or *ladders of cord, and in baskets*: of such as were made in *open day-light* upon frivolous pretences: of *dancings*, performed in the *Refectory*, and other *regular* places: nor lastly, of the *insolencies* committed at the *Nuns Funerals*. It was *ordinary* for the *Cordeliers* before and after these kind of Ceremonies to *run after those they fancied*, to *take them* in their *Arms*, *to kiss them*, to carry them from one place to another, to *play the fool with them*, to *go into private Nuns Chambers*, to *feast* it there, and be *frolick*, to stay *whole hours* there, a *Father* and a *Nun* alone by themselves,

and a little *penſioner* ſet as *ſentinel in ſoolery* to keep the door.

Nothing was *ever able* to put a ſtop to theſe *inſolencies*, and they have *ſcarce ever* gone in to confeſs the ſick, or to adminiſter the Sacraments *without committing new ones*.

"There has been *ſome* of them, who "after they had heard the Confeſſion "of one ſick *Nun*, *were upon a bed with* "*others*, and after they had ſpoken "*ſome devout words aloud* to them, *laid* "*themſelves down again to kiſs them, and* "*would* have *put their hands into their* "*boſoms*.

"There has been *ſome* of them, who "after they had given *extream Unction* "to a ſick *Nun*, and entred in again to "aſſiſt her at *her death*, *inſtead* of per-"forming this duty, have *conducted* "other *Nuns* to *their Chambers*, and "*there cooped up themſelves together in a* "*ſmall cloſet*.

"There has been *ſome* of them, who "after they had *ſate up a night* with one

"that

" that was dangerouſly ill, made them-
" ſelves be carried into the *Dormitory*,
" *to go into the Nuns Chambers to ſee*, as
" they ſaid, *their Loves in their beds*
" *before them.*

" In fine, there has been of them,
" that, at *the very foot of the Altar did*
" *violence to a Novice upon the holy day*
" *of Good Fryday it ſelf*, who had been
" ordered to go out into the Church to
" take down the *Repoſier*,
" according to the cuſtom
" of this Monaſtery : ſhe
" was *kiſſed by force*, and her *neck-*
" *cloth was torn off, and ſhe was often-*
" *times* * *very rudely handled.*

* Pluſieurs attouchemens.

INSOLENCIES.

IT is fit now to conclude the repreſentation, that was undertaken to be given of theſe *horrible diſorders. That which remains is too abominable, and our tongue is too chaſt to be able to expreſs*

expreſs it. *Not*, but that a *juſt regret and indignation* has made the greateſt part of theſe *Religious Siſters*, find terms to *declare ſuch things* in their Depoſitions, as to uſe their own words, *paſſe all Imagination*, and the *bare mentioning* of which *makes them bluſh.* But 'tis enough that they have been *once wrote*, that they are *under the hands of the Judges of the Court*, and that Time has not been able to blot them out of the memory of thoſe, who have *ſeen them themſelves in the time of their youth*, or *by eye-witneſſes* have been acquainted with the names of thoſe *Nuns*, whom the *Fathers* have engaged in the* *laſt Act of Incontinency*, with the *number of Children*, that they have had, * the *horrid contrivances*, that they have made uſe of to hinder theſe crimes from *making a noiſe abroad*, and other *abominable circumſtances* of * moſt horrible corruptions,

* Dans le dernier Deſordre.

* Les Artifices criminels.

* Des plus horribles corruptions.

ruptions, which made one of the *Anciente ſt* amongſt them, who had her ſelf been *overtaken* in theſe *dreadful debaucheries*, ſay, *That ſhe ſtood in admiration how this Houſe could ſtill ſubſiſt, and how it came not to be ſwallowed up, as thoſe miſerable Cities, of which the Holy Scriptures ſpeak.* But if the *Cordeliers* have omitted nothing that might draw down theſe ſad judgments upon this miſerable Houſe: And if the *Nuns* who have ſent their complaints to Court, may juſtly ſay, that they owe it only to the mercy of God, that (theſe *Fathers* have laid *all the traps imaginable* to make them fall into theſe dangerous precipices) they do not continue ſtill engaged in them: certainly they have *not leſs reaſon* to acknowledge, that if there be yet amongſt them any remainders of Piety and Religion, as it cannot well be doubted, conſidering the warm inſtances they make at *Court*, they do alſo owe that wholly to the particular providence and ſpecial favour

vour of the ſame Mercy. For the *Cordeliers* have omitted nothing that might plunge them in impiety, and take away from them the reſpect, that is due to the *Sacraments* of the *Church*, and the juſt confidence that ought to be repoſed in them, that are the diſſpenſers of them. See what the *Nuns* ſay of it in their Depoſitions.

The Diſorders of the Cordeliers.

"One called *N.* when *Confeſſour*, "being come into the Monaſtery to "give the *laſt Sacrament* to a *Nun*, was "*ſo full of Wine*, that he put on the "Prieſts Garments the *wrong ſide out-*"*ward*, and the *Mother Infirmiere* was "fain to guide his hand to apply the "*Holy Oyle.*

"Another called *N. Confeſſour too* of "our Houſe came once into the *Confeſ-*"*ſion-Chayr ſo overcharged with Wine*, "that he *fell aſleep*, and the *Nun*, that "was confeſſing to him after ſhe had

"began

" began a part of her Confeſſion *twice*,
" and *often* endeavoured to *wake* him,
" was at laſt *forced to withdraw.*

" I *my ſelf* happened to confeſs my
" ſelf to one *Father N.* who was *ſo full*
" *of drink*, that after I had *repeated* ma-
" ny Articles of my Confeſſion *over a-*
" *gain*, I was *forced* to leave it.

" One called *Father N.* who was here
" about *eighteen years* ago, has *revealed*
" *the Confeſſions* of *all* the *Nuns* of our
" Community, and has given them in
" *writing* to many *Cordeliers* to *favour*
" *their deſign* upon thoſe whom they
" had a mind to *ſeduce*, beginning theſe
" *Sacrilegious* writings by ſome *paſſage*
" *of Holy Scripture*, that was agreeable
" to the humour of the ſeveral reſpect-
" ive perſons. I *have ſeen and read this*
" *paper*, A *Cordelier* having *intruſted me*
" *with this ſecret* — I made my com-
" plaint of it to *Father N.* at that time
" *Provincial* the firſt time, who confeſ-
" ſed to me that he had ſeen that wri-
" ting.

" *Father*

" *Father N. twelve years* ago did the " ſame, and beſides, had always *Wo-* " *men* with him. *Once* he kept a *maid* " *of Provins* in *his Cloſet*, and her Pa- " rents being very much troubled for " her, thinking ſhe had been ſtolne, he " *ſent her away to Paris. He himſelf* " intruſted me with this *ſecret* to oblige " me to *conceal what* I *knew of it.*

" They *commonly* gave us *Directours* " who had no ſenſe of Piety in them, " who came into the *Confeſſion-Chair*, " after they had *been well-drunk*. And " for proof of this, I *my ſelf once* confeſ- " ſed to one *Father N.* to no purpoſe: " for he *ſlept ſo ſoundly* that he heard " not a word, which made me draw " the curtain, and endeavour to *awake* " him; but to no effect at all: many " ſaw him in this condition, and made " him be *carried to bed.*

" Another called *Father N.* was con- " tinually thus diſtempered. A *Ca-* " *non* of *Provins* called *M. N.* came *of-* " *ten* to ſup with him, to make him " drink,

"drink, that he might afterwards have "the pleasure of making him *reveal* "*our Confessions.* I *know it for a cer-* "*tainty*, that he did so; And when he "took his turn to go and divert him- "self with the *Canon*, they *carried him* "*to his bed* at eleven a clock at night "*upon a Hand-barrow*, which was "known but to *two other Nuns, sister N.* "and *N.* and *me.* 'Tis fifteen years a- "go that this happened.

"Another called *N.* who was here *two* "*years* ago, and was the *Provincial's* "brother, was *also* of this humour, "which made him entertain the *Nuns* "with a thousand impertinent follies, "and made them perfectly *ashamed* of "him.

"If some of them have been free "from these faults, they have had o- "thers that were not *less considerable*. "They have *never* set themselves about "planting any sense of Piety or Vertue "in us, but on the contrary have studi- "ed the ruine of both the temporal

"and

" and ſpiritual ſtate of our Houſe. The " *only Devotion*, that the Cordeliers in- " ſpired our *Siſters* withal, was that of " making them *often* deſire *Maſſes*, that " *they might get their mony*, and that " they might have an occaſion to viſit " us in the *morning*, and ſo to ſtay at " the Grate *all the reſt of the day* to di- " vert themſelves and to *make Collati-* " *ons*. Theſe were their *dayly practi-* " *ſes* which I have been a *conſtant* " *ſpectator of for near theſe thirty years*, " the time that I have been in this Mo- " naſtery, without mentioning other " things that are yet more wicked.

This *Factum* would be too much ſwelled if we ſhould relate all the particular proofs, that we have of the various diſorders, that the *Cordeliers* have committed in this Monaſtery, about the *Spiritual* concern of it. That which has been hitherto ſet down is but too ſufficient to raiſe *horrour* in all, that have *any concern* for the *Holineſs of our Myſteries*, *any love* for the purity of *Virgins*,

Virgins, and *any tenderneſs* for the intereſt of *Jeſus Chriſt* in the Souls that are conſecrated to him, and whoſe fidelity theſe *miſerable Directours* have endeavoured to corrupt for theſe *ſo many years* together: *A rabidis enim hominibus nomen ſceleratum eſt ſanctitatis; et ab immundis, et luteis pretioſum conculcatum eſt propoſitum Caſtitatis.*

SECTION XII.

Of the Diſorders *committed by the* Cordeliers *in the* Temporal *concerns of the Monaſtery of St.* Catharine.

AFter the horrible extravagancies which have been mentioned, it will not be difficult to believe, That the *Cordeliers* have conſumed all the *Temporal* incomes of this Monaſtery. It may eaſily be concluded, that *Religi-*

gious Fathers, who by *ſo many* different ways have made it their buſineſs to draw off *Virgins* from the fidelity they owed to their *divine* Spouſe, and to rob them of their Honour, and the *Spiritual* inheritance, which he had acquired for them with the price of his blood have not ſpared the *Temporal* inheritance, which they had received from the magnificent bounty of their *Illuſtrious Founders*, and the liberal Charity of their *Relations*.

"The profuſeneſs, which the *Cordeliers* have engaged them to ſhew in "*feaſting*, in *preſents*, and a *thouſand* other vain expences, and unworthy "of their profeſſion, are *alone* ſufficient "to make any one imagine the abuſes "that have been committed in this "point. For as the *Penſions* of private *Nuns* were not ſufficient to furniſh out the almoſt *continual Collations* that were made at the *Grates*, "the *Siſters* were fain to ſell their *ſilver-plate*, and whatever they could lay

"lay their hands on, of the *proviſions of*
"*Linnen* and other goods of the Com-
"munity (even to the *Church-Veſt-*
"*ments*; and the Ornaments of the
"Altars) for the effecting of their pur-
"poſe, particularly the *Servitour-Siſt-*
"*ers*; who being of mean birth, and
"not having ordinarily any *Penſions*,
"yet would have their *Gallants*, and
"their *Confidents* amongſt the *Cordeli-*
"*ers*, and would treat them like *Gran-*
"*dees*. This was done without any
"check, or ſcruple of conſcience: For
"the *Superiours* of the *Order* had taken
"care to fortifie them againſt *any* that
"might riſe in them; and *Father N.*
"the *Provincial*, upon the complaints
"that were made at the laſt *Chapter-*
"*meeting*, of the *theeviſh filching* prac-
"iſed in the Houſe, told them in *ex-*
"*preſs terms*, *That according to the Coun-*
"*cil of Trent*, *One might ſteal to the va-*
"*lue of twenty Crowns when he wanted*
"*Neceſſaries*; which indeed was an a-
"buſe of the Name and Authority of

"that *Council* to expoſe the Monaſtery "to *pillage*, *under pretence* of ſetting "bounds to that licentiouſneſs of "which they complained. Thoſe *Ne-* "*ceſſaries* having no other meaſure, "than the paſſion that the *Nuns* had "for the *Cordeliers*, and the *Preſents* "that they had a mind to make them.

"They have further proceeded to "ruine this Monaſtery by *another con-* "*trivance* no leſs deſtructive than the "former: They allowed thoſe, whom "they knew to be *wholly at their de-* "*votion*, to be Heireſſes to their *Siſters*, "and their *Aunts*, that happened to "die in the *Religion*: and the *Father* "*Provincial*, made the *Abbeſs Madam* "*de Montbron* give one of the *Nuns*, "one *Siſter N. five* or *ſix* conſidera- "ble pieces of *Silver-plate*, that an "*Aunt* of hers in the Houſe had left "her when ſhe died: and all this *plate*, "which amounted to a *conſiderable Sum*, "failed not of being *ſold* a little while "after, and *conſumed* in *Feaſtings*,

"and

"and *Preſents* made to the *Cordeliers*.

"Beſides all this, *againſt their own* "*Orders*, and the general complaints "of all the *Nuns*, they ſuffered the *Ser-* "*vitour-Siſters* to *blanch linnen* for "people abroad, which made them not "only make a gain to themſelves *a-* "*gainſt their vows* (for they diſpoſed "as they pleaſed of the gains of this "traffick) but alſo made them very "*chargeable* to the Community. For "by this trade of theirs, which took "up *all their time*, they became inca- "pable of doing them any ſervice: "They *broke their vow of Confinement* "by letting in men and women to "them every day, whoſe ſervice they "ſtood in need of, and who conſumed "the proviſions of the Houſe with "them: They ſpent a *vaſt quantity* of "wood to make the aſhes, which they "needed for blanching; ſo that they "have burnt *twenty four thouſand Fag-* "*gots*, once or twice as big again as "thoſe of *Paris*, in the compaſs of a

"*Year*, and more than *fourſcore* ſtrings "of wood; and thus they waſted all "things elſe, *Salt*, *Wine*, *Corn*, *Meat*, "making money of *all* that came into "their hands to ſatisfie the *ſenſuality* of "the *Cordeliers*, who maintained them "in theſe unlawfull intercourſes, be-"cauſe all the advantage of them re-"turned to *them* at laſt; and the money "that theſe *Nuns* raiſed by them, "which amounted to more than an "*hundred Crowns a year for* each of "them, was ſpent in *Feaſting*, in *Pre-"ſents*, and in *all kind* of profuſeneſs.

"But the Waſte that theſe *Fathers* "made of the Revenue of this Mona-"ſtery, never appeared more viſibly, "than ſince the Election of the laſt *Ab-"beſs*, who *was wholly devoted* to their "Intereſts, and whom, *for that reaſon*, "they have uſed all induſtry to con-"tinue in that office by *ſo many ſhame-"full* and unlawfull means. *'Tis ready "to be juſtified*, that *beſides* the Ordi-"nary Revenue, and the private allow-

"ances

"ances of the *Nuns*, *beſides* eighteen "thouſand Livres of debt contracted "by her, and which is "charged upon the "Houſe; *beſides* fifteen "Muids of corn, that "were due to the Houſe ſince the time "of the *Abbeſs* that preceeded her, and "which ſhe received, and *above* thirty "Muids more which ſhe has cauſed to "be ſold within theſe thirty years, "ſhe has *beſides* all this, ſince the *moneth* "*of February* 1660. in *Rents*, *Nuns-*"*Portions*, and *other incomes* of the "Houſe received more than 40000. "Livres of ready money.

* A Muid is five quarters, one combe, and a buſhel at London.

"And *all this* has been conſumed "partly in feaſtings and preſents, and "partly in other prodigalities, done to "ſatisfie the *greedineſs* of the *Cordeliers*, "who abuſed the eaſie nature of this "poor *Nun*, to enrich themſelves with "the ſpoils of this Monaſtery, and "this with a greater inſolence, than "they ever did under other Abbeſſes:

"As *it is viſible* in this, that in ſo ordina-
"ry a town as *Provins* they have *with-*
"*in few years* very *jollily* expended
"more than 25, or 30000 Livres in
"nothing but *Gallantries*, and *unneceſſa-*
"*ry* things.

'Tis not by this denied, but that the *better diſpoſed* part of the Community, when they perceived the inſatiableneſs and unreaſonableneſs of the *Cordeliers*, did ſometimes force themſelves to make oppoſition againſt it, and from time to time demanded, that according to the Order of their Houſe, and conformably to their *Rule*, they might chooſe a *Receiver*, and that the *Abbeſs* might not diſpoſe of the income of the Houſe but in *conjunction* with the *Treaſurers*. But the *Cordeliers* have *always* fruſtrated all ſuch kind of endeavours, *one while* perſwading the Officers, whom they ruled, to take the rent themſelves, and to employ faithfull and intelligent men abroad, who ſhould be intruſted with it, and *ſome-*

times

times making them take people for their *Receivers*, that were worth nothing, but ſuch as were *wholly* at their beck; and *ſometimes* exciting the *Abbeſs* as particularly the laſt, to take *all* the Revenue into her own hand, and to diſpoſe of it without *giving account of it*. So that *notwithſtanding* all that could be done, they have ſtill found out ways to make themſelves *Maſters* of the Revenue of the Monaſtery, and to diſpoſe of it to furniſh them for *Voyages into Italy*, for the *Provincials* viſitations in their Province, and to make proviſion for *Father N's Table*, which is one of the *moſt magnificent* in all the *Province of Brie*.

There is no mention here made of the *cheats*, that were uſuall upon the death of the *Confeſſours* of the Monaſtery: Of the *ſummes of money* intruſted in the hands of theſe *Confeſſours* for the affairs of the Houſe, and which after their death were carried away by the *Provincialls*: Of the *Goods and Habits*

Habits which the Houſe had furniſhed them with, and which they cauſed to be conveyed away; Of the waſte they made of the Wood of the *Nunnery* for warming & building of their Convent: Of their cuſtom of ſending ſuch *Cordeliers* into the Monaſtery as were the *particular intimates* of the *Nuns* to *engage their votes*, and to live *as they pleaſed* for two or three months together before the Elections: Of *Feaſts* made for the *Provincials* at the Elections of the *Abbeſſes*, and the two laſt of which amounted each of them to *four or five hundred livres*: Of *blank papers* ſigned by the laſt *Abbeſs* and put into the hands of a perſon appointed by them for the ſame purpoſe, and of a *thouſand* other ways that they have uſed to devour, and waſte the whole eſtate of this Houſe.

What has been related is ſufficient to ſhew the neceſſity of having theſe *Cordeliers* removed from this Monaſtery, ſince 'tis evident they have made

made uſe of the acceſs they have had into this Houſe, and of the Juriſdiction that they have uſurped, for nothing but to inrich themſelves with its ſpoils, and to laviſh out an eſtate, that was given for the ſubſiſtence of the ſpouſe of *Jeſus Chriſt*, in *feaſtings*, *debauches*, and in all ſort of *idle and ſhameful* expences; ſo that one may too juſtly compare theſe ſelf-intereſted *Directours* to thoſe *Mercenary Paſtours*, that Holy Scripture ſpeaks of, who inſtead of taking care to lead out the ſheep that God had committed to them, thought of nothing but of feeding themſelves with their Milk, of clothing themſelves with their Wool, and of eating up the beſt and fatteſt of them: Which made God declare by the mouth of his Prophet, that he would take his flock out of their hands, and would not ſuffer them to be any longer under their keeping, nor be made a prey of by them. *Ecce ego ſuper paſtores requiram gregem meum de manu eorum* &c.

SEC-

SECTION XIII.

That the Cordeliers *are under an impossibility of ever establishing good* Order, *and* Regularity *in this Monastery.*

THe *Cordeliers* have not only rendred themselves unworthy of the government of the Monastery of St. *Catharine* by the abominations that they have committed, and by the Waste they have made of the Temporall income; but 'tis *even impossible* for them to remedy the mischiefs that they have caused in this House. This is now undertaken to be made evident by shewing, That those *Fathers*, to whom it most appertains to maintain *Regularity* in the Monastery, are the persons who have committed the greatest Disorders: And that these *Nuns* have *invincible reasons* to have no con-

confidence *in all the Fathers* of the Order put together.

SECTION XIV.

That they are the Superiours *of the Order, who have engaged the Houſe of Saint* Catharine *in the Diſorders it is in.*

WHen the *noble parts* of a mans body are not affected, and that the Malady has not ſeized the Heart, nor the Head, we deſpair not of a ſick perſon how dangerous ſoever the diſtemper may be, that he labours under. But when the whole diſeaſe is got into the Heart or the Head, or that 'tis from one of theſe parts it paſſes into the reſt, he becomes incurable, and we have no more hopes of doing him any good. 'Tis the ſame in *Religious ſocieties.* Whilſt the Diſorder is but amongſt private perſons there is reaſon to hope to remedy it. But when 'tis the *Superiours* that commit

commit it, and that thoſe, who are ſet up to prevent it, infuſe it into others, the corruption in a ſmall time becomes general, and there is no remedy to be had but by that way of *Cutting off*, and *Caſting away*, that *Jeſus Chriſt* preſcribes to all the faithful in theſe words. —*If your right eye be an occaſion of offence to you, pull it out, and caſt it from you, and if your right hand be an occaſion of offence to you, cut it off and caſt it away from you.*

'Tis then with Prudence and Juſtice that the *Nuns* of Saint *Catharine* deſire to have the *Cordeliers* removed from them, ſince thoſe of the *Fathers*, that are ſtiled their *Superiours*, and who ought in that character to ſerve as *Eyes* to conduct them in the way to Heaven, and as *hands* to uphold them in the practice of their *Rule*, are thoſe who have diverted them from it, and have been the greateſt occaſions of ſcandall and falling, that they *ever* had in their Monaſtery. In effect, They

are

are *not only* private, and ordinary *Cordeliers*, that have committed all the horrible Diſorders before-mentioned in their Houſe: They are the *Viſitors*, Their *Deputies*, The *Provincial*, The *Commiſſaries General*, *Their Secretaries*, *The Wardens*, *The Doctours*, and *the Batchelours of* the Order, The moſt F*amous among their preachers.* In fine, They are thoſe that have the greateſt *dignities* amongſt them, that are the occaſions of all theſe Diſorders, that *have maintained* them, and have ever been the moſt *pertinacious oppoſers* of the Remedies, which from time to time have been endeavoured after. 'Twas they that *preſented* the *young Nuns* with their confidents, that wrote to them in their behalf, that *engaged* them to thoſe unlawful intercourſes before-mentioned, and that *took care*, when they were fallen out, to reconcile them again, and to renew their wicked intimacies.

"Theſe ſottiſh abſurdities (*ſays a*

"*Religious*

"*Religious ſiſter, ſpeaking of the alliances*
"*and marriages that they contracted to-*
"*gether*) were ſo far from being re-
"proved by the *Superiours*, that a *Nun*,
"that often nauſeated theſe kind of fa-
"miliarities, having taken an occaſi-
"on to break off that Marriage that
"ſhe had made with one of theſe Fa-
"thers, *Father N. the Provincial* took
"cognizance of it, and intereſted him-
"ſelf ſo far in it, that at his Viſitation
"he perſwaded her in very *idle, impertı-*
"*nent* terms to renew that correſpon-
"dence; He informed himſelf of her
"other intimates, & told her it was not
"enough to ſee them but once a week,
"that he allow'd her twice at leaſt.

"*Father N. Cordelier* writing to a
"*Servitour-ſiſter* in *very paſſionate and*
"*ſottiſh terms*, and the Letter coming
"into the hands of a *Lady of the Quire*,
"addreſſed to her from a perſon with-
"out, ſhe gave the *Father Provinciall*
"notice of it, & of all the *unſeemly com-*
"*munication* betwixt them that ſhe
had

"had been acquainted with, that ſo "for the future he might give check to "it: And yet notwithſtanding he gave "not the leaſt diſcountenance to it, "and ſuffered the *Father to give* the "*Servitour-ſiſter* as frequent viſits as "before. Again, Theſe *Fathers* have "not only brought us in hither *Books* "*of natural ſecrets, Romances, Cate-* "*chiſmes of Love*, and other pieces of "that nature; but *the Superiours* al- "ſo have approved the ſame: And "*Father N.* the *Provincial* in the pre- "ſence of a good part of the Commu- "nity having found one of theſe books "in the chamber of a *Servitour ſiſter* "did only ſmile at it, and that paſſed for "a conſent.

"*Father N. Provincial* gave all the "young profeſſed *Nuns* particular "intimates. He preached when I was "profeſſed, and called me his *Daughter* "upon this account: He told me aſ- "ſoon as I had my profeſſion that he "would give me a *Cordelier* for my "confident, *an handſome fellow, a*

"*Gallant*, and *well-fashioned*, and that "he would *marry* me to him: And "he talked *oftentimes* of these kind of "Marriages.

All the *Superiours*, the *Provincials*, the *Confessours*, have thus abused their employment, favouring, or being themselves the cause of, the Disorders, by admitting other *Cordeliers* into the House to engage the *Nuns* to these insinuating intimacies, and by this means to continue themselves *Masters* of all. For as *favours*, or *persecutions*, were always at the disposal of the *Cordeliers*, according as their *Beloveds* were either complyant with, or inflexible to, what the *Superiours* would have them do, the *Sisters* were fain to suffer all that they pleased to have done, and to give their assistance to the furthering of all their passions: And this made the *Provincials*, instead of imploying their Visitation in enquiring after the misdemeanours that were to be corrected, to set themselves about *courting* and *caressing* the *young professed Nuns*, to talk to them of

of their *Good friend*, and to excite them to take one, that they might have the pleaſure of being ſerved by him. And in purſuance of this they *authorized* the Collations and Entertainments at the Grates, *Gaming*, *laſcivious Songs*, *breaking of Glaſſes*, in honour of their *Ladies* before the eyes, and to the ſcandal, of the *whole Town*: And yet they always talked of, and amuſed the people with *Reformations in paper*, which they *never* ſo much as propounded, much leſs intended to have executed in the Houſe.

Beſides, They did *not only* ſtudy to engage theſe *young Virgins* in ſuch dangerous communications, *but* took care alſo to put thoſe into the *Offices* of the Houſe, whom they judged moſt proper to encourage & maintain them.

Ten years ſince at the Election of *Madam d'Oſonville*, the fourth *Abbeſs* of that name, they did what poſſibly they could to put *Madam N.* in her place, who had committed *the * laſt act of incontinency*

* Le dernier mall.

with Father N. Cordelier, and one of the reaſons of their perſecuting *Madam d' Oſonville*, was becauſe ſhe had been preferred before that other *Nun*.

After the death of that *Abbeſs Father N. Provincial* uſed great violence to hinder the Election of *Madam d'Oſonville* her Niece, who had 25 *votes* againſt ſeven for *Madam N.* whom the *Cordeliers* would notwithſtanding make *Abbeſs by force*, though ſhe had neither deſert nor birth, nor any thing more conſiderable than a *paſſionate love* for the *Cordeliers*, who had *ordered her in her youth as they pleaſed.*

Siſter N. did very freely ſhow about "the Letters wrote to her from the "*Cordeliers*, & told all the idle fancies "that they made her: ſhe gave them "acceſs *into her Chamber night and day*; "and in conſideration of her corre-"ſpondence ſhe was made *Miſtreſs of* "*the Novices.*

"*Father N.* eſteemed the moſt *Re-*"*gular* of them all did not ſcruple the "taking theſe kind of liberties in the

"cloyſter

"cloyſter. At *four a clock in the morning* "he went into a garden with *Siſter N.* "his *Good Friend*, and gave this rea- "ſon for it, that they were fallen out "with one another, and that he had a "mind to be reconciled. They were "*ſo well* reconciled again, that ſhe be- "ing made *Miſtreſs of the Novices* per- "ſwaded them all to entertain the "*Cordeliers*, ſo that ſhe preſſed her "*own Niece* to receive Letters from "them: ſhe acquainted them with all "the *Gallantries* that the *Cordeliers* "had ſhown her in her youth, made "them *act Comedies* againſt the expreſs "prohibition of *Madam N. the Abbeſs.* "And when a *Novice* was fallen out "with her *Cordelier*, ſhe ſlept not till "ſhe had made them friends again.

But in ſpite of all the intrigues of the *Provincials*, and other *Superiours* of the Order, they yet gave Offices to the *better diſpoſed* part of the *Nuns*; they then maintained the other *Siſters* in their licentiouſneſs and libertiniſme againſt them, and endeavoured to raze out of

their minds the good impressions, that these *Nuns* had laboured to give them.

"*Father N. Provincial*, in a *Sermon* "that he made at the profession of a "*Novice*, exhorted her to *vomit up the* "*bad Education* that her *Mistress* had "given her, *which was* to alienate her "mind from these infamous correspon-"dences; and *told her*, That her *Mi-"stress* did draw off the *Nuns* from "honouring and loving the *Order*.

"All those frequent Entertaines, that "the *Nuns* had with the *Cordeliers* in "the time of *Madam N.* were by the Or-"der of the *Father N. the Provincial*, and "of other *Provincials* also with a note "from them under their hand. So that "when she shut up the Grates, whilst "the General Chapter was held at *Pro-"vins*, as also upon other occasions, "they found out ways to visit one a-"nother by *the windows*, or else the "*Cordeliers* disguised themselves like "*Gentlemen* to visit the *Nuns* without "being known.

"When *Madam N.* the *Abbess* had

"with-

" withſtood ſome permiſſions that the " *Nuns* deſired, which might have pre- " judiced the reputation of the Houſe, " *Father N.* procured them for them un- " der the *Provincial's* hand, and gave " them this for *a leſſon, That if ſhe would* " *not obey her Superiour in this, that they* " *were not obliged to obey her.* One " has no reaſon to wonder, That all " theſe *Provincials* and *Superiours* were " ſo indulgent to others, ſince that " they cared not for condemning others, " in that which they *practiced them-* " *ſelves* after ſo *ſcandalous and wicked* " a manner.

" The *Licentious familiarities of* " *Father N. with Mother N.* has been " theſe 38 *years* the ſcandal of all *Pro-* " *vins.* It was begun by *magnificent* " *treats*, which he cauſed to be fetched " from the town for her, and her " party: Was continued by *preſents of* " *Rings, Watches, Looking-glaſſes*, and " all kind of vanities, which were even " laid upon the Altars for her, where " were interwoven the firſt letters of

"their names with *Hearts* made up of "*Flowers*, set with *ribbons of flame-co-*"*lour*, and born up by the *Images of St.* "*Francis* and *St. Clare*, who served "as supports for this abominable *Gal-*"*lantry*. After this *Sister* was made "*Porter* he discoursed with her ordina-"rily *four or five hours* together at the "great Gate (*a place far remote from* "*all company*) with a *Cordeliers* cloak "spread out *like a tent* to defend her "from the Sun. *The Porter* on the other "side to please the *Reverend Father*, "dressed her self ridiculously with "*bracelets of Pearle*, and *medals of Gold* "upon her arms, and with all manner "of *ribbons* at her waste: so that a *Lady* "of quality taking notice of all these "vanities at the dressing one of the "*Nuns* was so scandalized at it, that "she could hardly endure to let them "finish it, and she has testified it in a "*Declaration* that was drawn up 17, *or* "18 *years ago*, when the *Nuns* of St. "*Catharine* addressed themselves *the* "*first time* to the *Court of Parliament* to

be

"be delivered from the *direction* of "the *Cordeliers*. The ſcandal has "continued ever ſince, and 'tis not a- "bove two or three years ſince, and "the Reverend Father having ſent a "*noſegay* of Flowers with a great "many *dryed ſweet-meats*, and *march-* "*pane* to this *Mother* by *the R. F.* at "preſent *Warden of N.* on the *vigills* of "her *Feſtival*, & the *Mother* having en- "tertained them the next day (the day "of her *Feſtival*) at a noble Treat, car- "ried to the Convent of the *Cordeliers* "by a victualler of the Town, in the "afternoon the *Reverend Father* ac- "companyed with a great many o- "thers, who ſoon took up all the Grates, "came to her to give her a *ſere-* "*nade* under her chamber-window "that looks toward the great Court, "and afterwards carried the *Violin* in- "to the Hall below, where *Siſter N.* "was, whoſe Nuptials, he ſaid, he was "come to ſolemnize with *Father N.* who "the mean while did entertain her. "He began to *dance* firſt, and invited

others

"others alſo to take their part, which "other *Provincials* before him have "*often* done as well as he.

After all this can it be denied, that the *Superiours* of the Order are to be charged with theſe Exceſſes that have been committed in the Monaſtery of St. *Catharine*? That they have *not only* tolerated them, while they were in Office, but alſo fomented and authorized them by their own irregularity: And that if the Integrity of thoſe that command be the ſecurity of thoſe that obey, that the viſible corruption of all the *Superiours* of the *Cordeliers* is the principal cauſe of all the miſchiefs of this Monaſtery.

SECTION XV.

That the Religious Siſters of St. Catharine *have* invincible *reaſons not to have any Confidence in the* Cordeliers.

TWo things are abſolutely neceſſary to the ſettling of good Order and

and Regularity in a *religious* Houſe, *Authority*, and *a good eſteem of that Authority*. Now it has already been made appear, that the *Houſe* of St. *Catharine* can hope for no good from thoſe who have any Authority amongſt the *Cordeliers*. For they are the perſons, that have caſt it into the miſerable condition wherein it is. There remains then nothing, but to ſhow that it is impoſſible they ſhould have any *Confidence* in them, to make it evident; That they are in an utter impoſſibility of ever reſettling good Orders and Regularity.

'Tis omitted here, to repreſent the injuſtice and violence they have committed againſt private perſons, when their conſciences have not allowed them to give their Votes for thoſe that the *Fathers* would have put into Office, and who were often the leaſt regular of any, but the moſt linked to the intereſt of the *Friers*. *'Tis omitted here*, to mention their refuſals to allow extraordinary *Confeſſours* even at the point of

of death, when any *Nuns* for the ſecurity of their conſciences have deſired others than thoſe of the Order: Their *Excommunications* pronounced upon very ſlight occaſions againſt thoſe, that had no other crime than the diſallowing of their diſorderly conduct: *Their taking away the Right of ſuffrage* from the young profeſſed *Nuns* becauſe one of them once ſigned a paper made by the greateſt part of the Community in oppoſition to the veiling of a *Servitour-ſiſter*, which was ſolicited by *Father N. Their abuſing the ſubmiſſions* of the eaſie-natured *Abbeſſes* to them, making their advantages thereby to make them prefer the *Servitour-Siſters* before the *Religious of the Quire* upon ſeveral occaſions, ſo that they themſelves laughed at them for their ſoftneſs. Although all theſe things concern the whole Community, ſeeing that there is no private perſon that has not reaſon to fear the ſame treatment that they have ſhown their *Siſters*, they ſhall however be paſſed over in ſilence

ſilence. For that which they principally inſiſt upon, is *what condition* their Houſe was in under the conduct of the *Cordeliers* before the time of their admiſſion into it, *In what condition* they found it upon their entring it, and *how* they have continually ſeen it governed for more than theſe forty years, during the ſpace of which they have continued their profeſſion.

They themſelves have painted out theſe *Fathers* ſo lively in their *Depoſitions* as to make all abhor them, and which one cannot conſider without being ſenſibly affected, to ſee *Virgins* thus engaged, almoſt *in ſpite of their wills*, to live without regularity, without direction, without light, without inſtruction, and without piety.

How then could the Religious Siſters of St. Catharine after all this with any reaſon put confidence in the *Cordeliers*? *How* could they hope to be moved by them to keep a ſtrict obſervance of the hours of Divine Service, when they knew

knew that ordinarily. These *Fathers* kept their *Sisters* at the Grates at that time, and often made them stay there whole nights till five a clock in the morning: so that they were forced to take the hours of *Mattins* and *Mass* to repose themselves.

How could they hope to see them resettle the *silence*, that their *Rule* enjoyns them, in the House, when they knew, that by their continual Entertaines they had plunged it into an horrible dissoluteness, and that their Sisters were used to repeat *Songs* that they had learnt them, *not only* in the gardens, whither they came to hear them, and whither they often came to surprize them, and there passed whole nights with them; *but even* in the cloysters, and other consecrated places?

How could they hope, that they should perswade them to modesty in their Habits, when they knew, that they suffered their *sisters* to dress and trick up themselves with an extraordinary niceness, when they were to come to visit them

them, and that they furnished them with several sorts of *coloured Ribbons*, with *trimmed Gloves*, and many other instruments of vanity.

How could they hope to be inclined by them to keep nothing in *propriety*, & to put all to the common stock, that they might not break their vows of Poverty, when they have always allowed them to take as much of their Pensions as should be sufficient to provide for the Treats, that they engaged them to make them at the Grates, & for I know not how many other idle expences that they advised them to, even to the letting them distribute the bread to them, which they disposed of as they pleased?

How could they hope to be instructed by them in the Fidelity that they owed to their Divine Spouse, when they knew the measure of these Fathers dissoluteness against all their vows of Chastity, and had been witnesses of all their Profanations and Sacriledges?

Lastly, *How could they hope* to be assisted

aſſiſted by them in their deſign of labouring to live conformably to their *Rule*, to perform the *Obligations* of the life that they had embraced, and to reſettle the honour of their Houſe, when they ſaw that in all the conduct that they have obſerved in their Monaſtery (from the time that they firſt made themſelves Maſters of it) nothing but a *baſe indifference* for the intereſts of God, horrible libertiniſme, and moſt dreadful debauchery?

Of *Whom ſhould they expect* this remedy? Of *Private perſons*? They have an hundred times bluſht at their impudence and impiety. *Of Confeſſours*? They have ſcarce ſeen any that have not wallowed in all kind of vice and debauchery. *Of Provincials*? They have committed and authorized the greateſt Diſorders of their Houſe. Of *Thoſe*, who are advanced to be *Doctors*, *Batchelours*, and *Preachers* amongſt them? They have ſtill their Letters in keeping, that are full of impurity and abominations. *Of the Warden of Paris*? There

There is ſo much diſorder in his own *houſe*, that his *Majeſty* has been forced to name Commiſſioners to rectifie it. *Of the whole Province*? They have ſeen an Aſſembly in a *General Chapter*, held at *Provins* about nine or ten years ſince, render themſelves complices of all the extravagances that the chief of their *Fathers* had at that time commited in their Monaſtery: And beſides, They know that the *whole Province* is in a very diſmal diviſion and diſorder. *Of the Cordeliers* of other *Provinces*? Have not they learnt with horror, what paſſed at *Deſize*, and in the other Houſe of *Nuns* that are ſubject to them? And have not the *Cordeliers* themſelves made uſe of it to entangle them, if they could have done it, in the ſame Diſorders?

There is not then any ſecurity for the *Religious Siſters* of St. *Catharine* but by abſolutely removing from them all the *Fathers* of the Order; and 'tis with a great deal of ground, That they have *not only* diſtruſted, *but even* ab-

horred their Conduct, ſeeing it has been always full of corruption, and that they have with horrible licentiouſneſs and ſcandal violated all the laws of Diſcipline before their eyes, which by all the obligations of the charge that they had uſurped, they ſtood engaged, either to uphold when it began to fall, or to raiſe up again when it was once fallen.

SECTION XVI.

The Cordeliers *Reaſons to colour the Diſorders, that they have committed in the Monaſtery of* St. Catharine, *and to maintain themſelves notwithſtanding the Abuſes they have made of the Juriſdiction that they uſurped, are anſwer'd.*

THe *Cordeliers* perceived well enough, that if the Miſdemeanours they committed in the Monaſtery of St. *Catharine* came once to be diſcovered, they ſhould be univerſally con-

condemned by all the world, and that there would be no perſon of any judgment but would conclude them unworthy of the conduct of theſe *Nuns*, though it had of right belonged to them. 'Tis *that*, that has ſince put them upon uſing all kind of arts to prepoſſeſs the Higher Powers, and to fill them with impreſſions to the diſadvantage of the *Nuns* that proſecute them at Court, hoping by that means to oblige them the eaſier to lay hold of their Protection. To this purpoſe they preſented Petitions to their *General* at *Rome*, and to the *Congregation of Cardinals*; They preſented others to their *Majeſties in France*, and we have in our hands the copy of a Writing, made and preſented by them to a *Miniſter of ſtate*. And 'tis out of all theſe Petitions this Writing, and alſo out of ſome of the Letters, which their Friends have wrote to the *Nuns*, from whence we fetch the *Reaſons*, which we are going to ſet down here with all their ſtrength, endeavouring to anſwer them the moſt

briefly and clearly that is poſſible.

The *Cordeliers* Reaſons.

The Nuns *are ſubject by their* Foundation *to the* General *of the* Friers Minors, *and they cannot, without breaking their* Vow *and their* Rule, *return under the Juriſdiction of My Lord* Archbiſhop of Sens.

1. THeſe words muſt be underſtood either of all the *Nuns* of St. *Clare*, or particularly of thoſe of St. *Catharine*. It has been made appear that *both one* and *other* are alike ſubject by their Foundation to the Authority, and under the Juriſdiction of their *Biſhops*: and ſurely after the proofs that have been brought of it, there can no difficulty remain behind; whether we regard the *Right*, that is, the obligation, that binds the *Nuns* to live under the Conduct of their *Biſhops*, or whether we regard the *Fact*, that is, the actual dependance they have lived under, aſwell for receiving the Sacraments of

of them, as for the Elections of the *Abbeſſes* and admiſſions of *Nuns:* And conſequently, that it is not true, that theſe *Nuns* have been ſubmitted to the *General* of the *Friers Minors* by their Foundation.

2. Neither is it true, That their Vows oblige them to continue under the General of the *Friers Minors:* There is *not one word* of it in all their form of Profeſſion. And although they ſhould think themſelves tacitly engaged to it, yet they could not performe it to the prejudice of their other Vows, that make up the eſſential parts of their Religion, which it is impoſſible they ſhould acquit themſelves of under the *Direction* of the *Cordeliers.*

3. It is true, that their *Rule* ſeems to commit the care of their Monaſteries to the *Cordeliers.* But it has been made appear that it is rather a permiſſion, that the *Pope* has given them to undertake to be their Guides againſt the expreſs prohibition of St. *Francis* to the contrary, than an obligation upon

the *Nuns* to be ſubject to them: *That* whatſoever intention the *Popes* had that drew up their Rule, it could not prejudice the *Rights* acknowledged due to the *Biſhops*, by the *Holy Scripture*; *The Canons of Councils*, and *the General practice* of the whole Church, to govern the Monaſteries; and conſequently, that the *Cordeliers* could never exerciſe any *Hierarchical* Office, but in dependence upon their Authority.

4. Though it ſhould be granted that the *Nuns of St. Catharine* were by their Foundation ſubject to the *General* of the *Cordeliers*, that their *Rule* obliges them to it, and that their *Biſhops* conſented to it, (*which yet is not true*;) they could not *for all that* without *evidently endangering their Salvation*, continue longer under them, & conſequently are obliged by all Divine and Humane Laws to deliver themſelves from them, and to expect all their aſſiſtances from the Conduct of their *Prelate*, for whatſoever they ſhall ſtand in need of to the better acquitting themſelves of their Obligations,

Obligations, and to the reforming of their Lives.

'Tis ridiculous to pretend, as the *Cordeliers* do, that the *Nuns of St. Catharine* being without any neceſſity, and againſt the command of God and the Rules of the Church, withdrawn from under the Juriſdiction of my Lord *Archbiſhop of Sens*, that they cannot now without ſinning return under it, *how* great, *how* preſſing, and *how* evident ſoever the neceſſity be, which forces them to it.

The Cordeliers *Reaſon.*

'Tis only the Capriciouſneſs *of ſome private* Nuns, *and the Revengefulneſs of two of them, that they would have puniſhed for the ſcandalls they have occaſioned.*

IT is not intended here to make a particular diſcuſſion of this Affair, nor to apologize for thoſe *two Nuns*, who are acknowledged in the proceſs of the *Declaration* to have been the

firſt that implored the protection of the Court againſt the unreaſonableneſs and the Diſorders of the *Cordeliers*.

'*Tis aſſerted* here only, That the *moſt Reputed* amongſt theſe *Fathers*, ſhould not then, as they did, and as it is ready to be juſtified by their own Letters, have themſelves procured their going out of the Monaſtery, and given them recommendations to make uſe of to accompliſh their deſign.

'*Tis aſſerted*, That the *Provincial* and his *Secretary* ought not to have made them buy their leave to go to take the waters at the price of their Votes for the Election of an *Abbeſs*, to whom they thought themſelves *obliged in conſcience not to give it*; and if there be any ſcandal come of it, 'tis *they* that are to anſwer it to God and the World.

'*Tis aſſerted*, That if thoſe *Nuns* were guilty of the Crime that they were accuſed of, *The Provincial* and his *Secretary* ought not to have proteſted to them, that the Excommunications,

ons, that they ſhould pronounce againſtthem, ſhould be but a *formal ſhew*, *counterfeit anger*, and a *bug-bear*, and that the ſentence ſhould be nulled immediately after the thundering it out: That they ought at leaſt to have obſerved ſome ſhadow of Juſtice, and not declare them Excommunicated, deprived of both *Active and Paſſive Vote*, of the Offices of the Houſe, and of the liberty of the Grate, and this for as long as the *Provincial* and his ſucceſſours ſhould think fit, *againſt* all uſual forms of procedure, *without* any information, *without* confronting of witneſſes, and *only* after that the *Provincial* had entertained them for three days together at the Grate with *ſottiſh impertinencies*, and that the *Secretary* had the impudence to *kiſs one* of them *by force in the preſence of her Fellow-ſiſters*, and conſequently that they had Right to appeal from a ſentence *ſo unequitable*, and *ſo abuſive* as this was.

Laſtly, *'Tis aſſerted*, That if the *Provincial* had had the leaſt reſpect to God

in

in this pretended Chaſtiſement upon the account of the ſcandall, that the *Nuns* were accuſed to have been occaſioners of, he ſhould not have given one of them any ground to write that, which we ſhall preſently extract word for word out of a Letter which ſhe wrote *at the very time* that ſhe hoped he would be more favourable to her, and therefore cannot be accuſed, of having wrote it out of Revenge.

LETTER.

" *I ſhould never have believed*, that a " *Provincial* could *ever* have been ca- " pable of talking as he does: He " makes all things *trifles* and *niceneſs*: " He calls well-grounded Denyals, " weakneſs of ſpirit, ſigns of Ignorance: " In a word, *we are, ſaid he, Novices* " *in Love: If I were not affraid that this* " *would be intercepted, I would tell you* " *ſuch things as you are not able to ima-* " *gine.* No, you ſhall never know " them, for I ſhall never be able to

" acquaint

"acquaint you with them, without "*bluſhes*. If it be thus that he courts "his *Angelica*, and deſires ſuch favours "as theſe of her, ſure ſhe muſt be far "from being very ſqueamiſh to be a-"ble not to *nauſeate* him. His *Paſſion* "and *ſighs*, that he reproaches us for "being inſenſible of, do nothing but "ſcandalize us; and the teſtimonies of "his affection that he would give us, "do but make us hate him the more: "ſometimes he thinks he has Right to "command us to receive them, and at "other times is ſorry that his Power "extends not to the motions of the "heart to gain him that which he de-"ſires without further delay, &c.

The Cordeliers *Reaſon.*

They have the greateſt and ſoundeſt part of the Community on their ſide.

'TIS not to be wondred at, That the *Cordeliers* ſhould make ſuch ſtories to their *General*, and to the *Congregation* of the *Regulars in Italy*; *But* that

that they ſhould dare to procure *Letters Patents* in *France* upon ſuch ſuppoſitions as theſe, is a very ſtrange thing, and ſuch as does ſufficiently acquaint all people with the quality of their Spirit, which is, *to dare to doe, and to undertake*, any thing.

There were in the year 1664. in the *Monaſtery of St. Catharine, twenty nine profeſſed Nuns of the Quire*; There were ſeventeen of them, that on the fifth of *September*, the ſame year, ſigned the Act, by which they agreed amongſt themſelves, to petition my Lord *Archbiſhop of Sens* to receive them under his Conduct, and to ſhow all earneſt readineſs that was requiſit to return under his Jurisdiction. There remained then not above twelve, Two of which a little while after joyned with the other ſeventeen; ſo that now there was but *ten of the Quire* that declared for the *Cordeliers*, and that continued for any time in this party. Of theſe *ten* there were two that did moſt remarkably abandon them, and with the other

other nineteen Siſters ſigned all the Petitions that were ſince preſented to the Court, and to my Lord *Archbiſhop of Sens*: and ſo the procuration to deſire the Court to let them be under the Direction of this *Prelate*, and to be diſcharged of that of the *Cordeliers*, is ſigned by twenty one Siſters, *all Profeſſed*, and the *moſt conſiderable* of the Community, being almoſt all *Officers* of the Houſe, and having amongſt them *ſix diſcreet Matrons, and Mothers of the Council*, *The Miſtreſs of the Novices*, *The Treaſureſs*, *the Porters*, *The Tourner of the box*, *The Chauntreſs*, *The Stewards*, and the *Overſeers of the ſick*. And beſides, thoſe eight remaining *Nuns of the Quire* have *ſince* proteſted, and declared by ſeveral Acts paſſed in the preſence of *Notaries*, and that are now in their keeping, *That* they did approve of all the Orders that my Lord *Archbiſhop of Sens* had made for the regulating their Houſe, and that they would obſerve them: *That* they beſeeched him to receive them under his Conduct

Conduct and Jurisdiction, to which they submitted themselves as being their lawful *Superiour*, and that they did revoke, and disallow, all that they might have signed to the contrary.

The Servitour-Sisters themselves, who had imitated them in their revolt, followed them also in their return to their obedience, and besides have before *Notaries* declared: That formerly they had adhered to some of their Sisters Opinions, and resisted the Orders of my Lord *Archbishop of Sens*, in a perswasion that they were obliged in conscience to continue under the Jurisdiction of the *Cordeliers*: But that being since better enlightned in the truth they did depart from them, and submit themselves to his Orders and Jurisdiction. So that either these eight *Nuns of the Quire*, and *the Servitour-Sisters* have been sincere in all these *Authentick Acts*, or they have not been so, but *Cheats* and *Hypocrites*: *If they have been sincere in it*, then is there not one

one of the *Nuns of St. Catharine*, that deſires not to be under the Juriſdiction of my Lord *Archbiſhop of Sens*, and that does not acknowledge the neceſſity of baniſhing the *Cordeliers* out of their Houſe: *If they have not been ſo*, the *Cordeliers* muſt then confeſs, that they have but ſeven or eight *Nuns of the Quire*, and ſome *Servitour-Siſters*, *all* of them without any *ſincerity*, on their ſide.

The Cordeliers *Reaſon.*

The Zeal with which theſe Nuns *have eſpouſed the Intereſts of the* Cordeliers, *does ſufficiently vindicate them.*

LET *it be* ſuppoſed, that theſe ſeven or eight *Nuns of the Quire* that made ſo much ſhow of adhering to the *Cordeliers* were enclined to do ſo only upon ſcruples of Conſcience ill-grounded, ſince that they have declared it ſo themſelves. *Let us* not ſuſpect them

them to have had so much as any kind of regard to the Offices, that the *Abbess* had given them for giving her their Votes, nor any *Artifices* that the *Cordeliers* used to maintain them in the *Revolt*, and of which one may judge by an extract out of one of their Letters of the *twenty fourth of December* 1666. which is in keeping. "——If these "*Good Ladies* (*This Cordelier speaks of* "*the united Nuns.*) did but know what "the Government of *Bishops is*, they "would not be so eager for it. They "ordinarily court one *Superiour Nun*, "and let the rest live miserably, and "never see any body. We have exam-"ples of it every-where.——Discourses of this nature do sometimes make impression upon the mind, let it be never so well fortified: And thereupon it frames to it self strange *Ideas of silence and retirement*, that *fright* any that are not averse from conversation, and not accustomed to slight the protestations of Esteem and Affection, that they might receive by means of it.

Whatsoever

Whatſoever the true account of it is, *it is certain*, that the heat, with which theſe *Nuns* have eſpous'd the Intereſts of the *Cordeliers*, could not proceed from any eſteem they had of their conduct, and ſufficiency, ſince they have acknowledg'd in their Depoſitions, "*That* there "is but a *ſhadow of Religion* in their Mo-"naſtery, both in Spiritual and Tem-"poral concerns: *That* there is but a "pretence of *Noviceſhip*, and that the "*Miſtreſs of the Novices* has but the bare "name of it: *That* there is no *regular* "ſilence there: *That* there is no Chri-"ſtianity: *That* the *Superiours* allow "the *Servitour-Siſters* every thing, be-"cauſe they have votes at Elections: "*That* the *Nuns* have *unlawful familia-"rities* with the *Cordeliers*: *That* there "are great abuſes in the admiſſion of "*Novices* and *profeſs'd Nuns*: *That* all "this is told the *Provincials* at the times "of their Viſitations, but *that* they take "no care to remedy it: *And that* if "at the laſt Viſitation they gave ſome "Order for it, it was only becauſe of

" the Letters of the *Privy Seal, and that* " they never were obſerved, no more " than thoſe made in the time of *Mon-* " *ſieur Coqueret*: *That* the *Provinciall* " himſelf laugh't at the Order he had " made before the Election, which for- " bade the *Abbeſſes* diſpoſing of the in- " comes of the Houſe without the *Trea-* " *ſureſſes*: *That Theſe Nunns* themſelves " were drawn in to the *Cabal* for the " laſt Election: *And that* there are ſo " many diſorders in the houſe, that they " did heartily deſire to leave it.

The Servitour-Siſters, for whoſe ſake the *Cordeliers* have acted ſo many pieces of injuſtice, have not given them any Characters that are more to their advantage. One of the *moſt Ancient* of them has declared in plain terms, " *That* the Diſorders have been very " great amongſt them for this long " while: *That* ſhe does not believe, that " any good Diſcipline can be ſettled a- " gain under the direction of the *Corde-* " *liers*: *That* whatſoever ſhe was made " to ſign to continue under their con-

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"duct was not her intention: *That* her "heart bleeds, when ſhe conſiders all "the diſorders, and ſcandals that the "*Cordeliers* have introduc'd and ap-"prov'd of there: *That* the *Nunns* make "their *Cordeliers Gods upon Earth*: *That* "upon the death of a *Nunn* they go into "the *Siſters* Chambers, and they give "them all they have: *That ſhe knowes* of "many *Night-Entries* of the *Cordeliers* "into the Gardens *over the Walls*, and "*in at the Windows* of the houſe, to enter-"tain the *Nunns* there, and to paſs whole "Nights with them.

"All the reſt confeſs, *That* there is "no obſervation of *regularity* in the "Houſe at all: *That* they have known "it alwayes as irregular, and as full of "licentiouſneſs in the Spiritual affairs "as now: *And that* the *Cordeliers* con-"tract Alliances of near relations with "the *Nunns of the Quire*, and *the Servi-"tour-Siſters*.

In fine, One of theſe *Servitour-Siſters*, that ſeem'd the moſt reſerv'd in her Depoſitions, and ſtudi'd the moſt to ſpare

them, having well conſider'd upon it, and acknowledg'd the neceſſity there was, that their Houſe ſhould return under the Juriſdiction of the *Archbiſhop of Sens*, wrote to him in theſe terms:

LETTER.

—— "Suffer me, *My Lord*, to repeat my "Vowes under your hands, amongſt "which is comprehended that Vow of "Obedience, which I promiſe to pay, as "long as I live, to your Orders: 'Tis "*They*, that muſt give us a *new life* of "Grace and Reputation, hitherto in "great danger of being forfeited---- "Which has alwayes made your *Un-* "*worthy Daughter* ſay; We ſtand in need "of an Aſſiſtant as great as My Lord "*Archbiſhop:* But yet I oppos'd it un- "der the miſtake of a pretended Chari- "ty, that I was afraid to break, *though* "in the mean time I violated the Obli- "gations of true Charity, which ſhould "have made me adhere to you, as to my "*true Paſtour*..... I therefore beſeech "your

" your Grace to receive me under your " Protection, as I ſubmit my ſelf to your " Authority with affection and reve- " rence.

Could Virgins, that, after they had ſworn, and promis'd upon their Holy Vowes to ſpeak the truth, ſpeak after this manner, or that write thus of their own accord, and according to the dictates of their Conſciences; *could they* do any thing, that ſhould not turn to the confuſion of the *Cordeliers*, that had all this while ſeduc'd them?

The *Cordeliers* Reaſon.

There are none againſt the Cordeliers, but a few factious ſpirits, *that were offended at the* Reformation *which they would have brought in in Execution of his* Majeſties *Letters of the* Privy Seal, *and the Command of the* late Queen Mother.

THe Defence of thoſe perſons, that have none to make, is to render

thoſe, that accuſe them the moſt juſtly in the world, ſuſpected. It has been juſt now made appear, what the *Cordeliers* mean by theſe *Factious ſpirits*, and that 'tis of 21 Nunns of the Quire, *The Ancienteſt, and the moſt conſiderable* in the Houſe, of whom they ſpeak after this faſhion, becauſe *they were not able* to endure their diſorders and villanies any longer. They may in the judgment of the *Cordeliers* paſs for what they pleaſe to think them; That will not hinder them from glorying in this reproach, nor from declaring, that *they were not Offended* at any deſign they had to reform the Houſe, (ſince they are very well perſwaded, that there was an extraordinary need of it) but at the manner of the *Provincial*'s proceeding in it.

They were Offended to ſee a man, that had the title of *Provincial*, and one deputed from their *Majeſties* by vertue of Letters of the *Privy Seal*, which gave him full power to puniſh, and to make thoſe, who ſhould oppoſe his *Reformation*, be

be carried away into other Monaſteries, to ſee him declare to all the Nunns after he had assembled them together, "*That* he did not believe they were in "any fault, but that he muſt do ſome- "thing to make a ſhew for a little time "only: *That* he aſſured them upon *the* "*Faith of a Prieſt*, that the conſent, "that he required of them to the refor- "ming of their Monaſtery, ſhould not "engage them to any thing, and that he "took this courſe only to ſalve his own "Credit, and the Honour of the Com- "munity, which had been reflected up- "on by an information given in to the "*Queen.*

They were offended, that during the three days that this *Provincial* made his ſcrutiny, he promis'd many in private, "*That* all the Orders, that he ſhould give "ſhould be but for a ſmall time; *And* "*That* from that very time he, and his "*Secretary* made themſelves ſport with "them about all that great deſign of *Re-* "*formation.*

They were offended, That after they

had under this pretence of *Reformation*, ſpent three whole weeks in their Houſe in *Feaſting*, and *as looſe converſation, as they had ever uſed*, he thought it ſufficient to read them ſome Regulations, that he had drawn up, and which the *Cordeliers* were the firſt that did openly violate, entertaining the *Nuns* at the time of *Divine Service*, and *Solemn Feſtivals*, againſt the Injunctions that he had made to the contrary.

Laſtly, They were offended, That thoſe whom their Majeſties had entruſted with the Remedies that they thought fit to apply to their Diſorders, had on the other ſide labour'd after nothing more, than *to* diſguize them, *to* conceal them, and *to* invalidate them, by giving encouragement to hope for impunity. So that if it be true, that this pretended *Reformation* gave the occaſion to all the hot purſuits that the *Nuns* make at Court, 'tis becauſe it has perfectly convinc'd them, *That* there was no good to be hop'd for from the *Cordeliers*; *That* they would always engage them

them ſtill *deeper and deeper* in the greateſt Diſorders; and, *That* they were not to expect *Reformation* from *People*, that had ſo many things to reform amongſt themſelves, and who ought to have taken care to cure themſelves, before thinking of healing others, if they would avoid the reproach mention'd in the Goſpel.

The *Cordeliers* Reaſon.

They made Songs of the Cordeliers, *and turn'd the* Provincial's *Words and Actions into* Raillery.

'*Tis not here intended* to juſtifie all that a falſe zeal, or the too great liberty, that the *Cordeliers* had us'd theſe *Nuns* to, might make them ſay againſt them. '*Tis only affirm'd*, That it was the intereſt of theſe *Fathers* not to draw upon themſelves the contempt of theſe *Virgins* by their diſorderlineſs *ſo unavoidably*

avoidably as they did: *Nor* to vilifie their Miniſtery by the execrable profanations of it, that they acted before their faces: *Nor* to render themſelves ridiculous by transforming themſelves into *Gallants*, and *Romantick Heroes*; by uſing their language, and imitating their Actions, and Faſhions.

Would not theſe *Fathers* have had the *Siſters* ſhow reſpect to the fooleries, and impertinencies, that they heard them utter? *That they ſhould* have had a venerable opinion of a *Provincial*, that *danc'd*, and *play'd the Gallant* at their Grate? *And that they ſhould* have expreſs'd Eſteem and Reverence for people, in whom the *moſt tolerable thing* that they ſaw was the meanneſs, and extravagance of their talk? *Let them know*, that in the opinion of the *Holy Fathers*, there are *Railleries*, that are *Acts of Juſtice*, and that there are ſome things, as *Tertullian* ſays, that cannot be confuted but by laughing at them, leſt that if they ſhould be taken notice of in a *ſe-*

rious

rious way, one ſhould ſeem to give them reſpect. *Multa ſunt ſic digna revinci, nè gravitate adorentur.*

The *Cordeliers* Reaſon.

My Lord Archbiſhop of Sens *inſtead of Executing his Commiſſion, endeavour'd uſurp the Power over them by infuſing Rebellion into them, and by maintaining them in it ever ſince.*

THis *Prelate* never endeavour'd to uſurp that Juriſdiction; for it belongs to him by *Divine right*, and ſo is inſeparable from his Character. Is it not an impudent preſumption for *Friers*, who in that quality are no more than *Laicks*, and ought to eſteem themſelves happy, that God has ſeparated them from the World to ſerve him in *ſilence and retirement*, ſhould diſpute with a *Great Archbiſhop* for his moſt *Hierarchical* Rights, and the moſt eſſential to his *Prieſthood*? *Multùm erigimini, Filii Levi---*

vi---num parum vobis eſt, &c. Though my Lord *Archbiſhop of Sens* (in the Viſitation, which he was oblig'd to make in this Monaſtery to ſatisfie the duty of his Charge, and the urgent ſupplications addreſs'd to him for it by the *Nuns*, whom the *Court* by Order had remitted to him for redreſſing of their Grievances) were ſuppos'd to have warmly repreſented to them, and with that tenderneſs, and Fatherly Charity, that in all his diſcourſes he joyns to the Authority, and Holy Majeſty, that goes along with the Word of God, made them ſee the neceſſity there was of recurring to the moſt powerful, and wholeſome *Remedies* to cure the diſtempers that they labour'd under, and others yet greater, that threatned them; *Could* they make ſuch juſt *Remonſtrances* paſs for the ſeeds of revolt and rebellion? If the *Religious Siſters of St. Catharine* had not of themſelves been convinc'd of the neceſſity there was of removing the Authors of ſo many Diſorders away from their Houſe, and of ſeriouſly applying

ing themſelves to the ſalvation of their Souls; *Could* My Lord *Archbiſhop of Sens*, without wounding his Conſcience, and being wanting to the principal function of his Miniſtery, leave them any longer under ſuch miſchievous engagements, and not draw them *to* a ſolid Converſion, *to* a true Change of their lives, and *to* make the beſt improvement of thoſe precious moments of Mercy and Grace? And *may not* this *Prelate*, ſeeing the unjuſt Slanders, that the *Cordeliers* ſpread of him, with a great deal of Juſtice uſe thoſe words to them, that *Jeſus Chriſt* us'd to the Ruler of the *Synagogue*, who was in indignation to ſee him heal a Woman on the Sabbath-day, that had been for many years poſſeſs'd with a ſpirit, that render'd her infirm, and that bowed her ſo together that ſhe could not look upwards; *Ye Hypocrites, is there any of you, that looſes not his Oxe, or his Aſſe on the Sabbath-day, and drawes them not out of the ſtable to lead them to drink? Why then ſhould not this Daughter of* Abraham, *(This Society of Virgins) whom Satan*

tan had kept bound for ſo many years (by the means of your Miniſtery) be once in its life deliver'd from thoſe bonds?

The *Cordeliers* Reaſon.

He Excommunicated thoſe, that were zealous for the Obſervation of their Rule, *and caus'd* Nine *of them to be* forcibly *carried away, ſo as was never before heard of.*

'TIs the leaſt that people, who have ſo *little Conſcience* as the *Cordeliers*, could do to revenge themſelves of the wrong, that they pretend to have received of My Lord *Archbiſhop of Sens*, *To* ſuppoſe ſome things, and to diſguiſe others. It has been ſeen in the proceſs of the *Declaration* what oblig'd that Prelate to make it be declar'd to ſome of the *Religious Siſters of St. Catharine*, *that* they had incurr'd the Cenſures of the Church, and *that* for not having preſented themſelves to the Communion at *Eaſter*,

Eaſter, *and not* for having zealouſly adhered to the obſervance of their Rule. When one reflects upon the manner of obſerving the *Rule* in this Monaſtery ever ſince the *Cordeliers* made themſelves Maſters of it, *and that* there is ſcarce any ſingle Article of it, that they themſelves have not openly violated, *what can one judge* of the pretended zeal of theſe 7 or eight *Nunns* for the obſervance of their *Rule*? And is there not ground to fear with St. *Auguſtine*, That this ſhadow of Piety comes from the leaves of that Tree, which our *Firſt Parents* covered themſelves withal, when they were aſhamed of their nakedneſs? *Iſta umbra pietatis*, &c. As for the pretended violence us'd in the carrying away of theſe *Nunns*, there is nothing more falſe, as appears by the *Declaration* of it drawn up in Court: And we refer it to the teſtimony of the *Nunns* themſelves, who cannot deny but that they were treated with all poſſible kindneſs and civility.

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The *Cordeliers* Reaſon.

Although the Nuns of St. Catharine *ſhould of right be under the Authority of my Lord* Archbiſhop of Sens; *yet this cannot be done but by the* Pope, *who withdrew them from under his Juriſdiction.*

THis way of reaſoning ſuppoſes, that the *Nuns of St. Catharine* have been wholly withdrawn from under the Juriſdiction of my Lord *Archbiſhop of Sens*, which the *Cordeliers* can never juſtifie by any Title; *and though they could*, 'tis prov'd that theſe Titles would be null, and unlawful, being contrary to the *Holy Scripture*, *the General Councils*, and *Tradition*, all which do (as we have made appear) ſubmit the *Nuns* to the Juriſdiction of the *Biſhops*.

But ſuppoſing that theſe *Nuns* had been withdrawn from under the Juriſdiction of my Lord *Archbiſhop of Sens*, 'tis

'Tis deny'd that there is any need of the *Pope's Briefs* to make them return under his Juriſdiction. For 'tis a conſtant Maxime in *France*, *That* to Authorize an Exemption, there muſt be certain and lawful Titles, that is, ſuch as are accompani'd with all the conditions that the Laws of the Land, and the Liberties of the *Gallicane Church* do require: But that to render to the *Ordinaries* what belongs to them, there needs no Titles nor Apoſtolical Briefs; the return to a *common Right* being natural and ſpontaneous, and having no need of any thing, but the bare Renunciation of thoſe, who are in poſſeſſion of the Priviledges, by which the effect of that ſubordination that God has ſet amongſt the Members of the Body of *Jeſus Chriſt*, that is, his Church, is ſuſpended, and obſtructed. So that this *Renunciation* only does happily return them to that rank to which they belong, and where God, according to St. *Paul*, had plac'd them himſelf.

The *Officers of the Court of Rome* have acknowledged this truth themſelves up-

on many occaſions, and 'tis to be ſeen in the *Regiſters of the Parliament*, in a Plea of the late M. *Advocate General Bighon*, inſerted into the Decree that was made betwixt my Lord *Biſhop of Bologne*, and the *Cordeliers*, *That* they have aſſerted, when they were recurr'd to upon like occaſions, *That* there was no need of the *Pope's Briefs* to reſtore things to a common Right. The *Parliament* has often decided this Queſtion, but particularly in the Decree before-mentioned: For ſome *Religious Siſters* of the *Annunciade of Bologne* having appeal'd as from the abuſe of the Orders, which the *Biſhop of Bologne* had made in their Monaſtery; and the *Provincial* of the *Cordeliers* having interven'd in the cauſe, and having alſo appeal'd as from the abuſe of the ſame Orders; amongſt the Reaſons that were us'd at the *Hearing* to confirm their *Appeals*, and which were very nigh, the ſame that the *Cordeliers* now alledge againſt my Lord *Archbiſhop of Sens*, they ſtuck not openly to maintain, *That* the *Pope* having put thoſe

thoſe *Nuns* under the Juriſdiction of the Order of St. *Francis*, *His Holineſs* ought to give his leave to withdraw them, and remove them from it. But yet the *Court* by a Decree of the 6th of *January*, 1651. (*without having any regard* to the interventions) declar'd them not receiveable in their *Appeal* as from Abuſes: And the Juriſdiction, that My Lord *Biſhop of Bologne* had ſome years ſince reaſſum'd over that Monaſtery, was confirm'd, though the *Cordeliers* had alledg'd, That thoſe *Nuns* had been ſubjected to them from their very firſt foundation, and that there had been neither *Briefs* nor Priviledges obtain'd of the *Court of Rome* to withdraw them from under their Juriſdiction.

The *Cordeliers* Reaſon.

This is to affront the whole Order, to diſhonour it, and to ſcandalize the Church.

THere is nothing more abus'd, than the words that *Jeſus Chriſt* made uſe of to exhort the *Faithful* carefully to avoid the ſcandalizing of their Brethren; for they are indifferently apply'd to thoſe that *reprove* Vice, and to thoſe that *commit* it: And there are people, who value themſelves highly for their *Spirituality*, that are ſcarce at all touch'd at the licentiouſneſs, with which the greateſt crimes are committed, and yet are even tranſported with *rage* at the zeal, with which they are reprov'd. The *Holy Fathers* were of another mind. *They thought, That* true Charity towards perſons oblig'd them to write with heat againſt their Extravagances, and they were not at all afraid, that they ſhould treſpaſs upon that Charity, or paſs for ſlanderers for reproving them openly,

if

if they were of a publick nature. *They thought, that* they were the true cauſers of ſcandal that committed theſe publick Diſorders, and the perſons, to whom *Jeſus Chriſt* ſpoke, when he ſaid; *Wo be to the World becauſe of ſcandals: Wo be to the Man by whom ſcandal comes:* And that on the other ſide, Thoſe, that reprov'd them, that put a check to them, were thoſe, that Jeſus Chriſt had encourag'd to this Pious Office, when he ſaid, *It is neceſſary, that ſcandals ſhould come.*

The rank, which the *Scribes*, *Phariſees*, and *Doctours of the Law* held amongſt the *Jews*, was much more conſiderable than that which the *Cordeliers* hold in the Church; ſince that *Our Saviour* ſays of them, *That they ſate in the Chair of* Moſes, *and therefore commands to obſerve and do all that they taught*: And yet the eminent Condition to which they were rais'd, and the need that they had of being in eſteem amongſt the people, that they might follow their inſtructions, *did they* hinder him from reproving

the irregularities of their *baſe* and *ſelf-intereſted practices?*

"*Does he* not call them *Hypocrites, full* "*of ſtupidity, blind Guides, Serpents,* and a "*brood of Vipers? Does he not* compare "them to *whited Sepulchres, which appear* "*fair without to the eyes of men, but within* "*are full of dead mens bones, and all kind of* "*rottenneſs? Does he not* tell them, *That* "*they appear alſo juſt to the eyes of men,* "*but within are full of Hypocriſie and In-*"*iquity?* That they make clean the out-"ſide of the platter and cup, whilſt *their* "inward parts are full of rapine and un-"cleanneſs? *And though one of thoſe Do-*"*ctors replies upon it,* That in ſpeaking "ſo he diſhonoured them alſo, *Does he* "*for all that leave off diſcovering their Vil-*"*lanies?* And *does he not on the contrary* "*add,* Wo be to you alſo, ye Doctors of "the Law, who load men with burdens "not to be born, and will not touch them "your ſelves with your little finger? "*In fine, when his Diſciples themſelves re-*"*preſented to him,* That the Phariſees "were offended at the liberty, with

"which

"which he reproved their errors, *Does* "*he not answer them*, Let them alone; "They are blind leaders of the blind, *Si-* "*nite eos*; *Cæci sunt*, &c.

Let not the *Fathers Cordeliers* then fancie, that the *Rules* of any Charity, that was due to their Order, are violated by representing, as has been done, their disorderly practices, to shew what necessity there is of taking an House of Virgins out of their hands, who are in such evident danger of being ruin'd. *'Tis* the Abuses and Disorders that they have committed in this Monastery, that dishonour the Order, and scandalize the Church, and not the zeal of those that endeavour to purge the House of the corruption, with which they have infected it: And there has been so little of a Design in this to diminish the true Glory of the *Order*, and that of their *Founder*, that on the contrary, 'tis acknowledged for a reason of the *Cordeliers* falling into all these horrible misdemeanors: *That* they have departed from the spirit of St. *Francis*, *and that* contrary to all his

Maximes, and Prohibitions they have engag'd themſelves in the Government of the *Nuns*.

But if any Perſons after all this be yet offended at the liberty with which theſe *Exceſſes* are repreſented, they will by that ſhew (as St. *Bernard* ſaid formerly to juſtifie himſelf for the holy liberty, with which he had in his *Apology* reprov'd the Diſorders that were ſlipt into the Order of *Cluni*) that they love not the *Order*, ſince that they are unwilling, that the Corruptions and Abuſes of it ſhould be condemn'd and baniſh'd out of it. And there is nothing to be anſwer'd to theſe perſons, but the ſaying of St. *Gregory the Great*, cited alſo by St. *Bernard*: *'Tis better that Scandal ſhould come, than that the truth ſhould be abandoned.* It is better that Scandal ſhould come of it, than that *Religious Fathers* upon the account of their being *Religious* (and therefore that their diſorderly Practices cauſe great Scandal, when they come once to be known) ſhould without check profane the *moſt ſacred things*, and carry *unchaſt*

flames

flames into the very Sanctuary, and into thoſe hearts, which *Jeſus Chriſt* has after a peculiar manner made his *Temples* and a part of himſelf.

This is now that, which oblig'd them to diſcover the Diſorders that the *Cordeliers* have committed in the Houſe of St. *Catharine*, and not the deſire of affronting an Order, which it may be, would be ſtill in the high eſteem that the humility and ſimplicity of St. *Francis* had put it into, if it had continued obedient to the *Biſhops* under whom it receiv'd its birth; and if theſe *Fathers* had taken care, as their *Saint* had often warn'd them, to avoid having any communication with the *Religious Siſters*.

It was thought to be the Intereſt of the Church, That the Biſhops, who have *Nunneries* of the *Religious* of St. *Clare* in their *Dioceſſes*, and who are oblig'd to give an account to God of them, ſhould have knowledge of theſe Diſorders, that ſo having a pious indignation at them, they might apply themſelves, as they are bound by their Office, to hinder the com-

committing of the like Crimes in thoſe Houſes, or to baniſh them out of them, if by ill hap they were ſlipt in.

It was thought to be the Intereſt of the State, That Magiſtrates, and Publick Perſons ſhould have knowledge of theſe Diſorders, that ſo they might be convinc'd of the neceſſity there is of maintaining the *Biſhops* in the Rights given them by the *Holy Scriptures* and *Councils* over all the Monaſteries of *Nunns*, for fear that the *Friers*, who have gain'd upon their Juriſdiction, ſhould change thoſe *Holy Retirements* and Sanctuaries into Houſes of Debauchery and *Temples of Venus*; and leſt this abuſe (that the *Cardinals* and *Prelates* aſſembled together by the Order of *Paul the Third* did ſo long ago declare, That it did diſfigure the Church, and confound Chriſtianity, ſhould at laſt draw down the wrath of God upon the whole Kingdom by the publick Sacriledges, which, *ſay they*, are committed with horrible Scandal in moſt of the *Nunneries*, that are under the Conduct

duct of the *Cloiſtered Friers.*

It *was thought to be the Intereſt of all the Friers* to have knowledge of theſe Diſorders, that they might the more zealouſly love and value the retirement and ſolitude of their Cloyſters: *That* they might take the more care to avoid the *Nunns* Grates, with whom all the *Founders* of the ſeveral Orders have expreſly forbidden them to have any communication; *And that* that they might mind themſelves of that excellent ſaying of St. *Auguſtine: Quid intereſt, utrum in uxore, an in matre, an in ſorore, dum tamen Eva in qualibet muliere caveatur.*

It was thought to be the Intereſt of all the Nunns to have a knowledg of theſe Diſorders, that they might unite themſelves with joy to the Government of their *Biſhops*, their true Paſtors, and lawful Superiors, and that they might carefully fly from thoſe *Strangers*, *thoſe Mercenaries*, and *thoſe falſe Paſtors*, "*That* "*come* to them cloathed like ſheep, but "within are ravening wolves; That "devour their houſes under a pretence

"of

"of making long Prayers, and that even "to this day compass Sea and Land to "make one Jew, and after he is made "so, they make him twice as fit for Hell "as themselves.

Lastly, *It was thought to be the interest of the Nuns of St. Catharine, That* the World should have a knowledge of these Disorders, that they might withall acknowledge the Justice of their *Suits* at *Court* against the *Cordeliers*, *the Generosity* that has made them shut their eyes against all humane Interests and Considerations, that might have drawn them from it, and *the Christian Contempt* they have shown of *Worldly Reputation* to recover their solid and true honour, which consists in resettling good Order and regularity in their House.

The *Conclusion.*

AFter what has been represented in both parts of the *Factum*, and the *Answers* now made to all that can be

be alledg'd in favour of the *Cordeliers*, it cannot be imagin'd that there is any perſon, that is not fully convinc'd of the Juſtice of the Pretenſions of the *Religious Siſters of St. Catharine.*

They deſire not that the Authours of all the Diſorders, that have been committed in their Houſe, ſhould be inform'd againſt, *That* ſo long a continuation of crimes ſhould be puniſh'd; *That* the violation of ſo many Laws, ſo many abominable profanations ſhould be chaſtiz'd according to the ſeverity of the *Rules* of *Church* and *State.*

They freely offer to chaſtiſe them upon themſelves by the ways of *Chriſtian* Penance, *to* expiate them by their groans and tears, and (as much as in them lyes) *to* appeaſe the Wrath of God (juſtly provok'd by all theſe abominations) by the Mortifications of a Religious life, and the conſtant Sacrifice of an humble and contrite heart.

They only deſire, that by removing theſe pernicious Directours of their Conſciences from their Houſe, they might

might recover their liberty of acquitting themſelves of that, and their other Obligations: *That* by preventing theſe *Fathers* from having any acceſs to them, they might put a ſtop to the Scandals that they have occaſion'd for ſo many years together: And that ſuch people, as have neither *Faith*, nor *Honour*, nor *Conſcience*, might not be any longer ſuffred in the face of the whole Church to abuſe a Juriſdiction, which they have uſurped over them againſt the moſt Eſſential Rights of *Epiſcopacy*.

If nothing but their temporal intereſts had been concerned in it, and that the *Cordeliers* would have been contented to have conſum'd their whole Revenue in *Feaſting*, *Diſſoluteneſs*, and *Debauchery*, or to have robb'd them of it, according as they had occaſion for it, and ſtood in need of it to ſatisfie their ambitious ends, their ſelf-intereſt, or their pleaſures with it, it may be, they ſhould have diſſembled the injury.

But the honour of their Monaſtery is now concern'd in it, which cannot be reſet-

ſettled in its former ſplendour, but by reſtoring it again to the Authority of My Lord *Archbiſhop of Sens*, unto which, according to the *Holy Scripture*, *according to the Canons of the Councils*, according to the Maximes of the *Gallicane Church*, according to the *mind of St. Francis*, and according to the *firſt ſettlement of the Nuns of St. Clare*, it ought to be ſubmitted.

The Salvation of their own Souls, and of the Souls of all thoſe Virgins, that in Succeſſion of time ſhall be engag'd in this Monaſtery, are concern'd in it, whom theſe *Fathers*, conſidering what kind of people they are, will moſt indubitably alienate from the Fidelity, which they owe to *Jeſus Chriſt*.

Laſtly, *The main thing, that is made the matter of the preſent concern, is*, To procure a Favour for a great number of Virgins Conſecrated to the Service of God, that would never be refus'd to any Ordinary Virgins of the World, who had been ſtolne away from their Parents,

Parents, and implor'd the assistance of the Laws to be restor'd to them back again, and to be forc'd out of the hands of those Villains, who would with so much insolence have attempted upon their honour.

The *Religious Sisters of St. Catharine expect this favour from the Court* with so much the more Confidence, as the danger in which they are is more evident.

They hope that that *August Tribunal* having always testify'd so much zeal for the Rights of the *Bishops*, and for the true liberty of the *Nunneries*, will be tenderly affected at the hard captivity, under which they have for so many years groan'd: And that they shall not have a less favourable Audience, than the *Religious Sisters of St.* Eutrope *of* Chanteloup, *Those of St.* Nicholas *of* Melun, Those of the *Annunciate at* Bologne, *and so many others* besides, who have been restor'd to the Jurisdiction of their *Bishops* for abuses *very like to*

those

thoſe, that the *Cordeliers* have committed in their Houſe.

They hope, that It having given teſtimony of its great zeal for upholding all *Religious Orders* in the firſt ſpirit, and ſincerity of their *Foundation*, It will not refuſe this favour to the *Order of St. Francis*, by obliging the *Cordeliers* to leave off being *Directours* to thoſe, whom their *Holy Founder* has ſo ſtreightly forbid them to meddle withall, which he ſo earneſtly endeavour'd to ſeparate them from, and which we look'd upon as a very dangerous ſnare that the Devil had laid for his Order, and which they themſelves have found by dreadful Experience to have been ſo miſchievous to them.

Laſtly, *They hope*, that the *Court* having always given evidence of ſo much Judgment, Prudence, and Equity in its determinations, It will not now abandon them to the power of thoſe, who have engag'd them in that ſad condition, that they have for ſo many years continu'd in; but will on the contrary

conclude, That the Miſchief that the *Cordeliers* have done to their Monaſtery cannot be prevented but by the cares of their true Paſtour.

FINIS.

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The Contents.

A *Chapter-Act of the* Nuns *to own their* Factum.

A Factum *or Declaration in Court for the* Nuns *againſt the* Friers. Page 1

Section I. *What gave occaſion to the Suits made by the* Nuns *againſt the* Cordeliers *at Court.* pag. 3

Sect. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8. *That the* Cordeliers *have no juſt Title for their Juriſdiction over the* Nuns. p. 37

Sect. 9. 10. *That if they had had any Title, they have now loſt their Right to it by their Miſdemeanours, which are ſpecified by theſe particulars.* p. 40

Sect. 11. *Abuſes in their Spiritual Concerns.* p. 43

In the Education of Penſioners. p. 46

Novices. *Education of young Novices.* p. 48

And of young profeſſed Nuns. p. 53

Undecent Books allowed them. p. 54

Inſtructions. p. 55

Preſents to the Nuns. p. 57

Letters, Poſies and Devices. p. 58

Publick Alluſions. p. 64

Dedication of Theſes. p. 65

Profanation of Sermons. p. 70

The

The Marriages of the Friers and Nuns. p. 72
Frolicks and Entertainments. p. 75
Love-Letters. p. 78
Sacriledge and Profanations. p. 93
Mad Revellings and ſecret Entries into the Nunnery. p. 95
Inſolences and Diſorders of the Friers. p. 97
Which the Nuns *bluſht at.*
Sect. 12. *Abuſes of the Temporal Concern.* p. 105
Riotous Waſtes of the Revenue of the Nunnery in Debaucheries, by Theſts and Cheats, in Licentiouſneſs. p. 105. *to* 115
Sect. 13. *That it is impoſſible there ſhould be any good Diſcipline ſettled in this Nunnery by the* Cordeliers. p. 116
Sect. 14. *The Superiours of the* Order *caus'd the Diſorders,* viz. *The Provincials, Maſters of the Revels. The* Nuns *Preferred for their kindneſs.* p. 117
Sect. 15. *That the* Nuns *have Invincible Reaſons not to truſt the* Cordeliers. p. 130
Sect. 16. *The* Cordeliers *pretences to colour their Deſigns, are anſwered.* p. 138
The Concluſion *repreſenting the whole Caſe.* pag. 180

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